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## **Massive Turkish tourism online campaign touts Hellenic, Christian Orthodox monuments, artifacts as ‘Turkish treasures’**



**A massive advertising campaign continues on the world’s foremost social media platforms to promote tourism to Turkey, a campaign that has included repeated and admiring references to Hellenic and Orthodox Christian monuments and artifacts in the country, but ones that it envelopes with the term “Turkish treasures”.**

**In a related development, Turkish Culture and Tourism Minister Mehmet Nuri Ersoy told reporters in the Black Sea city of Trabzon this week that the iconic Panaghia Sumela Monastery - the most important religious site for Pontian Hellenism - as well as the 13th century Hagia Sophia Cathedral of Trabzon, will be opened for visitors in 2020.**

Trabzon is the Turkish name for Trebizond or Trapezounta, which for millennia was a center of Hellenism on the southern shores of the Black Sea.

The Hagia Sophia Orthodox Cathedral of Trabzon was converted into a mosque by the Ottomans in the late 16th century; more than a century after the city was conquered. It remained a mosque until the late 1960s, and was then turned into a museum by Turkish authorities.

**Another Hellenic-related in the region that is under renovation, and will open in 2020, is the Karagiannidis Villa**, known today as the Atatürk pavilion, in the seaside district of Soğuksu.

According to the short promotional videos seen practically everywhere on the Internet over the past month, Turkey's tourism board invites Internet users to admire the renowned mosaics of the Hagia Sophia of Constantinople – the pre-eminent Cathedral of Christendom for a millennium – or to admire, up close, the early Hellenistic-era Alexander Sarcophagus, on display today at the Bosphorus metropolis' main archaeology museum.