

## **Nostalgic Approach to Touristic Train Travel: Doğu, Güney Kurtalan and Van Gölü Expresses**

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### **Extensive Summary**

Travelers interact by traveling to places to meet each other. Staying in a hostel, walking in nature, climbing, taking photos or taking a train ride is all part of this interaction process. Moreover, travelers not only communicate with someone face to face, they enrich communication through new places. For this reason, being with the senses such as seeing, touching, hearing, smelling and feeling physically is very important for the emotional intensity of individuals. From this point of view, railways have played an important role in the history of tourism and offered travelers the opportunity to travel to different destinations. While railways remain an important travel alternative in many parts of the world, they are also an important source of cultural heritage and experience. Especially steam trains recreate nostalgic memories. Therefore, the story of Thomas Cook's first train trip between Leicester-Loughborough cities in England in 1841 with approximately 400 people has become a legend. With almost two centuries of history, this first travel is a milestone for tourism and trains. Due to the characteristics of the trains at that time, trains appealed to everyone.

Similar to the example in the world, having long routes Doğu, Güney Kurtalan and Van Gölü Express the nostalgic trend line from yesterday to today are moving between important routes in Turkey. Nowadays, these trains are being used for touristic experience in long-distance and lesser known regions. This study has been prepared to learn the experiences in these newly developing travels and to determine what to do to make these experiences more "pleasant times".

Train travels in Turkey gained momentum with each passing day. Therefore, the research was carried out within the scope of touristic train travels which are Doğu, Güney Kurtalan and Van Gölü Expresses. Snowball technique was used to identify the people participating in the research. For this purpose, on March 3, 2020, two participants were reached first and then 17 participants in the search made on Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, YouTube, and Twitter. Face-to-face interviews were made with 17 participants (8 March-28 March 2020) accessible through “Zoom”. Social media accounts of 51 more participants were reached through these interviews. Afterwards, interview questions were sent to these 51 participants from the determined internet networks. The data collection process carried out on the internet was completed on June 13, 2020. The data obtained were first uncovered, and content analysis was made according to the questions. Content analysis was carried out with the MAXQDA.

It has been revealed that train travels are preferred due to *being on the road, culture, nostalgia, landscape, social media, and cheapness*. The obstacles or delays in participating in train travels are determined as *time, financial reasons, budget and accessibility to trains*. While the participants are satisfied with the *ticket prices*, they find the *service quality low and the schedule and activities inadequate*. The necessarily of train travels is determined as the *cheerful atmosphere, landscape, sleeping wagon and activities*.