

Geotourism potential of Başkale, Van, Turkey

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In this study, travertine formations in Tandoğdu, Ekecek and Dereçi villages, and ignimbrite formations in Yavuzlar Village located in Başkale, Van were examined.

Tandoğdu and Ekecek villages can be accessed from the 13.km of Başkale-Hakkari highway. These villages have geotourism potential due to having ridge travertines and hydrothermal pools developed on these travertines.

Dereçi Village can be accessed by directing to the west from the 30.km of Başkale-Hakkari highway. Dereçi Village is famous with its travertines which is very similar to the travertines of Pamukkale, Turkey one of the UNESCO world heritage sites. Travertines in the region were formed by the flow of volatile-rich hydrothermal fluids ascending through a shear fracture from a down slope. The region has the most important geotourism potential in Eastern Anatolia by containing two ridge travertines developed along a shear fracture, a travertine bridge and partially active terrace type travertine and a waterfall.

Yavuzlar Village can be accessed by going to the northwest for 12 kilometres from the Albayrak Township located in Başkale. Yavuzlar Village is famous with its ignimbrite formations which are very similar to the ones in Cappadocia, Turkey one of the UNESCO world heritage sites.

As a result, most of the geological formations in the region can be characterized as geoheritage. All these geological formations should be examined and defined better and preserved for the future potential of these sites as geoparks.