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Living Below the Surface in Cappadocia

Cappadocia, in central Turkey, is famous for its unique underground houses. These homes were carved out of the soft volcanic rock, providing both shelter and protection from the elements. The underground houses were designed to be cool in the hot summers and warm in the cold winters, making them a perfect adaptation to the local environment.

The entrance to the house was through a narrow tunnel that led to the main living space. This area served as the heart of the home, where family members would gather to eat and socialize. The walls of the rooms were often left unpainted, showing the natural texture of the rock. The floors were made of (1)____, which kept the rooms cool underfoot.

In the main living area, there was a low table surrounded by (2)____, where the family would sit to eat. Since chairs were not commonly used, most activities were done on the floor. The furniture was simple like wooden chests or shelves carved directly into the walls.

One of the most important parts of the house was the (3)____, where meals were prepared. This area usually had a stove made of stone, with a hole in the roof above to let out smoke. Nearby, there were (4)____ for storing grains and vegetables.

Bedrooms were small and functional, with beds made from (5)____ or built into the rock itself. Thick blankets and cushions were used for warmth. People would sleep close together, as the underground houses were naturally insulated from the cold outside.

The underground houses often had (6)____ leading to different levels, connecting various rooms and storage areas. These tunnels could also serve as escape routes or lead to hidden areas if the house was attacked or needed to be defended.

The underground layout of these homes also meant there was limited natural light, so (7)____ were placed around the house to provide illumination. Small niches were often carved into the walls to hold candles or lamps.

Storage was crucial in these houses, and many rooms were dedicated to keeping (8)____. Large clay jars were used to store water, oil, and wine. These were placed in cool, dark corners to keep the contents fresh.

Outside the house, families usually kept animals, which were an essential part of life. Small (9)____ were often located near the house, where sheep, goats, or chickens were kept. These were built close to ensure that the animals could be easily cared for, even in bad weather.

Despite being underground, these homes offered comfort and safety. The design of the rooms and furniture reflected the practical needs of the people who lived there, allowing them to survive in difficult conditions. The thick walls of stone provided both (10)____ and security, making the houses a reliable place to live.

Word Bank

stone, kitchen, stairs, shelter, supplies, mats, shelves, pens, lamps, cushions