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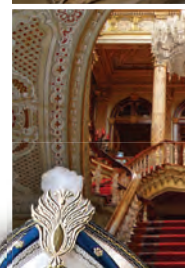
101

THINGS TO
SEE & DO

in

ISTANBUL

Top tips to make
your trip truly
memorable!





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Istanbul is a truly extraordinary city. Straddling both sides of the Bosphorus, this is where East meets West...Asia and Europe coming together not just physically, but culturally.

History and heritage are evident in every pore of the city's being, from ancient palaces and masterpiece Byzantine churches to the domes and minarets of the Ottoman mosques which dominate the city skyline.

We've picked 101 of the most interesting things for visitors to see, do and experience to get the most from their visit. There are also dozens of bonus tips along the margins right through this guide.

Read on, explore and enjoy.

FOREWORD

The best of both worlds



Temel Kotil...“Istanbul forms a natural bridge between East and West.”

“Our aim is to make Istanbul a world hub—the most important commercial centre and the most reachable city in the world—by 2023, the centenary of our Republic.”

Welcome to Istanbul!

As Chief Executive Officer of Turkish Airlines, I have been fortunate to have visited some of the world’s foremost cities. And for me, Istanbul is certainly one of the most charming. For sure, it is incomparable in terms of its unique history, spectacularly beautiful monuments and vibrant soul that lives in even its quietest streets. I am thankful that this marvellous city is Turkish Airlines’ hub so that I have the chance to live and work in it and explore its heart at my leisure.

Istanbul forms a natural bridge between East and West

and is the only city in the world on two continents, Europe and Asia. It lies on both sides of the Bosphorus channel and the Sea of Marmara, connecting the Black Sea to the Mediterranean. Today, Istanbul is once more the gateway to the Silk Road, a cultural and economic bridge between Europe and Asia connecting on land what Turkish Airlines does in the sky, linking more than 30 cities around the Silk Road to the world.

Istanbul is located in the heart of Eurasia. Thanks to this excellent geographical position, it is only three to five hours by air from the far reaches of Europe, the Middle East and a major part of the African continent, making it a well-known transfer point.

The planned construction of a new airport in Istanbul highlights this exceptional position and no doubt will add to its supremacy as a trading hub and cultural melting pot.

At Turkish Airlines, our aim is to make Istanbul a world hub—the most important commercial centre and the most reachable city in the world—by 2023, the centenary of the Turkish Republic.

It is difficult to describe this wonderful city in words, so it is my pleasure to invite you to take a closer look at Istanbul, to experience its fantastic atmosphere, amazing culture, fascinating history and delightful people.

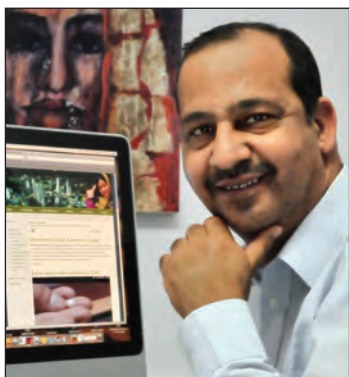
I wish you an enjoyable stay in Istanbul.

Temel Kotil, PhD
President and CEO
Turkish Airlines



A MESSAGE FROM THE PUBLISHER

Istanbul is a city full of surprises!



Ali Hussain Mushaima
Publisher

The major challenge in compiling this book of 101 things to see and do in Istanbul has been not so much what to include, but what to leave out!

SINCE 2004, when I set off with a team of adventurers on our first Friendship Arabia expedition from Bahrain to Ireland (the tour is documented at www.friendshiparabia.com), Istanbul has always been a major stopping point for us. Time and again the city has delighted us with the hospitality of its people and the never-ending list of places worth visiting and activities worth doing.

In fact, the major challenge in compiling this book of 101 things to see and do in Istanbul has been not so much what to include, but what to leave out! Whether you're interested in art and music or your preference is for history and architecture, or perhaps you simply want to relax and watch the world go by, Istanbul is the perfect place to be.

Its location between East and West creates a vibrancy that is unique in the world and I am sure that you will be delighted with the welcome you receive.

The team and I hope this guide will help you to make the best of your visit. Enjoy your stay in Istanbul, a city full of surprises!

Ali Hussain Mushaima

A healthy opportunity

By **A. Issa A. Ahmed Alhashimi LLM**

General Manager & Managing Partner

Businesstanbul Health Care Services LLC - United Arab Emirates

I HAVE been coming to Istanbul since 1999. At first I was a transit passenger flying on to Europe and the United States. Later in 2000, having met my Turkish business partner, I started to visit Istanbul more frequently and witnessed the tremendous development of Istanbul and the Turkish economy. Today, I am a true fan of Istanbul and the Turkish people.

My decision to promote Istanbul materialised in 2010 when I was invited to the Health Tourism Congress organized by the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Turkey.

As Businesstanbul, we decided to work to become the foremost provider of Turkish health tourism and to promote this service across the Gulf Cooperation Council Countries, namely Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Oman. As a company, we were also part of the organizing committee of the World Healthcare Congress, based in Boston, and took an active role at the Abu Dhabi World Healthcare Congresses from 2010 to 2012. Having visited all the JCI accredited hospitals in Turkey, we offered our services exclusively to a select group of hospitals and health resorts that met the highest standards of care.

I am very grateful to the doctors and nurses and all the hospital management teams, as well as international medical equipment suppliers, especially General Electric, who have supported our endeavours.

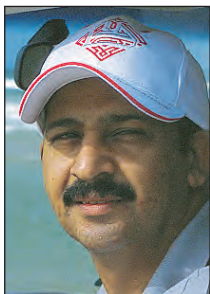
Working together, we have created Centres of Excellence in the medical field and can now proudly promote the overall health system in Istanbul as the foremost healthcare provider in the region.

While you are in Istanbul, I recommend that you try to explore what this wonderful city has to offer.



A. Issa A. Ahmed Alhashimi

EDITORIAL TEAM



Ali Hussain Mushaima

Publisher

Ali Hussain Mushaima founded Arab World Tours in 1994 and has published numerous travel guides, including the Visitor's Complete Guide series and the 101 Things to See & Do series of books.

Both book series have been tremendously successful, with a total of more than 150,000 copies sold to date.

Ali developed his love for travel and adventure as a child, and in recent years has undertaken several Friendship Tours, driving from his native Bahrain to destinations across Europe and the Middle East to promote travel in the region.

explore101.com
friendshiparabia.com



Archie D'Cruz

Editor & Creative Director

Archie D'Cruz is a seasoned editor, writer and designer with more than 25 years of experience in both journalism and advertising. His Canadian publishing and design firm A Type Of Magic has been behind the success of several books and magazines, including all 13 books in the Visitor's Complete Guide and the 101 Things to See & Do series.

Archie recently helped create marketing campaigns for two *New York Times* bestselling books for Harlequin and his advertising work has appeared in countries as far apart as the UK, Australia and the US.

He has travelled extensively and counts photography among his prime hobbies.

atypeofmagic.com



Carlo Olinarez

Designer

Filipino graphic artist Carlo Olinarez, who put together the maps in this guidebook, has lived and worked in the Middle East for more than 15 years.

He worked in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, for two years as senior colour separator, before moving to Bahrain where he currently resides.

When he isn't at his computer, Carlo enjoys reading, watching movies, photography and biking. He has been a member of the brotherhood Tau Gamma Phi since 1983.



Haider Akbar Rafiey

Photographer

Haider Rafiey fell in love with photography when he was still a child. When his father refused to buy him a camera, he began going to the market every evening after school, wheeling people's groceries home in a barrow so he could earn enough to buy one for himself. He still has the Agfa box camera he bought with that money in 1954, but his tools have evolved since then and now include Nikon and Minolta digital SLRs.

Haider's preferred subjects are nature as well as traditional homes in Bahrain. He takes great pride in being able to teach young people the art of photography, and he is a long-standing member of the Bahrain Arts Society.

haidarrafiyey.net



Kadir Kir

Photographer

Istanbul-born photographer Kadir Kir's work has graced some of the world's top publications. Apart from the *New York Times*, where he has been a long-time contributor, Kadir's photographs have also appeared in magazines such as *Art Decor*, *Cruising World*, *Nautica* and *Sky Life*.

His pictures have also been selected by the country's tourism ministry to promote Turkey in marketing materials.

Kadir co-edited two books, *A Blue Romance* and *Sultan's Table of the Turkish Cuisine*, both of which have sold well.

A lover of classical music, he says he derives inspiration from listening to the works of Bach, Mozart and Vivaldi.

kadirkir.com



Sarah Clarke

Principal Writer

Sarah Clarke is a globe-trotter and a prolific writer who currently calls Bahrain home. She has previously worked and studied in the USA, Japan, Singapore and Canada where she completed her Ph.D.

Sarah has spent the last seven years in the Middle East, where she has acted as researcher, writer and advisor to various non-profit organisations, including the Qatar Green Building Council and the Regional Institute for Active Learning, Bahrain. She has also written for other books in the 101 Things to See & Do series.

Sarah recently co-founded a management consultancy, DSC Solutions Co. WLL, in Bahrain. In her spare time, Sarah rescues, rehabilitates and trains dogs.

www.dscwll.com



Shafeeq Khalaf Al-Sharqi

Photographer

Shafeeq Khalaf Al-Sharqi was interested in the creative arts from as long as he can remember, taking up photography and painting from an early age. He later studied interior design at the College of Fine Arts in Cairo, Egypt.

He won his first award for photography in Bahrain in 1980, and has won several more international honours since. One of his images was chosen in a list of Best 1,000 Pictures in the World for 2010 at Trierenberg Super Circuit photography awards, and he scooped up as many as nine awards for his work in 2012. He was also awarded the E.FIAP title in 2013.

His favourite photography themes are nature and people.



Sebahat Köksal İşık

Writer

Sebahat Köksal İşık is a Turkish businesswoman who has lived in Bahrain for 25 years. She attended high school in Istanbul and still visits the city from time to time. Sebahat's passion for Istanbul began in childhood with extensive travelling along the Black Sea from Ordu to Istanbul. Those experiences taught her to appreciate the beauty of nature and the history attached to the city.

Sebahat, who runs her own business and management consultancy in Bahrain, enjoys travelling, photography and reading history. She serves the local community through the Rotary Club of Sulmaniya where she was elected president for 2013/14.

ysm-consultancy.com

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EXPLORING ISTANBUL

There is so much history coursing through the veins of the city once known as Constantinople, that simply exploring it on foot is enough to bring the past vividly alive.

THE MAGIC OF

By Sarah Clarke

WHAT makes a city great? Is it something to do with its location? Or perhaps its natural resources? Or could it be a sequence of historic events that over centuries, by chance and design, shape its heart, moulding it into a cosmopolitan centre that nudges our curiosity?

Maybe it's the product of a kaleidoscope of people drawn from across the world which creates a unique vibrancy and soul that resonates through the ages no matter what changes occur elsewhere, making it THE place to be? Perhaps it's the clash of

Istanbul



The Sultanahmet Mosque, popularly known as the Blue Mosque for the blue tiles adorning the walls of its interior, was built from 1609 to 1616. It is considered to be the last great mosque of the Classical period.

EXPLORING ISTANBUL

thunderous empires and mighty political forces that challenge the very fabric of its being, each



time transforming it into something more strategically important and magnificent than its previous incarnation.

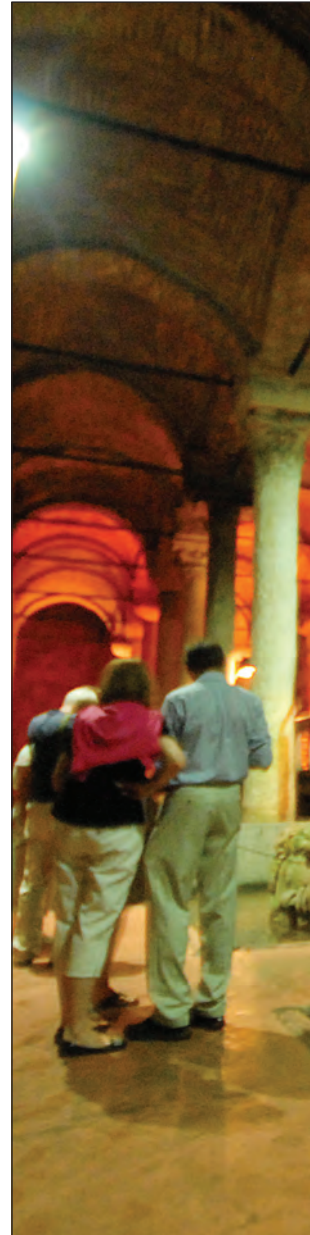
Very probably, it's a combination of all this and more that fashions a city into something special—a marvellous patchwork of old and new, reflecting all

The Hippodrome was once the sporting and social centre of Constantinople, and was the venue of chariot races in ancient times.

that has gone before, yet managing to celebrate and embrace that which is to come...that is Istanbul!

This unique city, which through the ages has grown into an intricate tapestry of Roman Byzantium, Ottoman Constantinople and Republican Istanbul elements, defies easy description, shaped as it has been by a multitude of cultures, religions, empires, politics and peoples across the ages—from early Roman times (and possibly as far back as early human migration from Africa) to the present day. But it is surely a great city! For nowhere else in the world has history contrived to create a city that spans two continents—at the crossroads of trading routes between Asia and Europe and where there is access by sea to the Mediterranean, Africa and the Black Sea.

Scant wonder then that Constantinople/Istanbul has been one of the most sought after cities in the world—by emperors seeking to cement their power in the region, by traders looking to develop their





Built in 532 AD, the Basilica Cistern once supplied water to nearby palaces. Many believe the upside down Medusa head on the base of one column was done to ward off evil spirits.

EXPLORING ISTANBUL



The Rumeli Fortress, perched high on the embankment above Rumeli on the European side of the Bosphorus.

businesses, by migrants in search of a fresh start, and by artists, poets and musicians looking for inspiration.

Standing at the top of the Galata Tower in the heart of the Beyoğlu district on the European side of

the city (in what was formerly Pera) or on Istanbul's highest point at the summit of Çamlıca Hill on the Asian shore, it's not hard to see why this city has been of such importance for centuries—on a clear day the view stretches as far as the Princes' Islands in the



south and the villages in the upper reaches of the Bosphorus heading towards the Black Sea.

From these vantage points, imagine for a moment how in the 4th century the Roman Emperor Constantine built mighty

defensive walls to safeguard his city and then began to lay the foundations for an empire that endured over 1,000 years—a period during which successive emperors commissioned some of the world's most remarkable places of worship, including the

EXPLORING ISTANBUL





great cathedral of Haghia Sophia in the time of Justinian.

Now, ponder if you will, how, in the late 14th century, Ottoman forces tried time and again to capture this vital capital. They finally laid siege to the city in the 15th century, dragging their ships overland from the Bosphorus to the Golden Horn before overwhelming the city's inhabitants with an army of tens of thousands in the epic battle of 1453.

The Ottomans, under the leadership of Fatih Sultan Mehmet, transformed a city in decline into a magnificent capital, converting churches into mosques, building the Topkapi Palace and fashioning the beginnings of a trading centre in what was to become one of the world's largest market places—the Grand Bazaar.

Architect Sinan, during the reign of Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent, left an enduring legacy of more than 200 mosques, many of them still standing, including the remarkable Süleymaniye Mosque complex. Then, in the 19th century, western

Far left: This graphic painting at the Panorama 1453 Historical Museum tells the story of the conquest of Constantinople by Ottoman Sultan Mehmet II. The battle marked the end of the Byzantine Empire in the region. The painting depicts the siege of the city and the principal battle that led to its fall.

EXPLORING ISTANBUL



influences began to transform the city, with architects drawing inspiration from European designs that can still be seen today in building facades and at glorious palaces such as the Dolmabahçe on the European side of Istanbul.

With the decline of the Ottoman Empire, turbans and tunics gave way to western attire. The ubiquitous fez was banned by Atatürk in 1925 and consigned to the dress-up box of history, though the brilliant red uniforms worn by the Janissary military bands' men still endure.

All this and much, much more is waiting to be discovered in Istanbul which, though no longer the capital (it was moved to Ankara following the founding of the Republic of Turkey in 1923), has become one of the world's favourite tourist destinations.

It's not hard to see why. At every footstep, the inquisitive are rewarded with the stories that make up the very fabric of this city from the banks of the Sea of Marmara to the west, the Golden Horn to the north and the Bosphorus to the East.

And explore it on foot you must, for around every corner is a narrative waiting to unfold!

Stand in the centre of the Hippodrome and imagine chariots racing by, the winner

Far left, the Dolmabahçe Palace is the largest palace in Turkey.



garnering favours from the Emperor. Walk from the banks of the Golden Horn up through Galata to İstiklal Caddesi and breathe in the atmosphere of a bustling, thriving community where elements of Ottoman grandeur are entwined with present day modernity. Lose yourself in the meandering streets of the Fener and Balat districts and judge how disparate communities have lived side

İstiklal Caddesi, one of the most famous avenues in Istanbul, is visited by nearly three million people in a single day over the course of weekends.

EXPLORING ISTANBUL

Far right, the Bosphorus Bridge that connects Asia and Europe.

by side in relative harmony for centuries. Stroll uphill through the graveyards of Eyüp and meditate on the stillness before heading off to admire the view of the Golden Horn that once inspired French novelist Pierre Loti and probably many more of Istanbul's literati.

Watch the world go by on Galata Bridge and imagine how much more cosmopolitan and exotic it must have seemed in the 19th century when people from all corners of the world strolled along in their traditional attire. Wander from mosque to church and back again in the Sultanahmet district and become enthralled with every nuance of their architecture and internal decoration while observing the faithful responding to their call for prayer.

Head to the Topkapı Palace and soak up the magnificence of its harem, and breathtaking pavilions that house stunning treasures from afar. Explore beneath the streets of the Sultanahmet in the cathedral-like, underground Roman

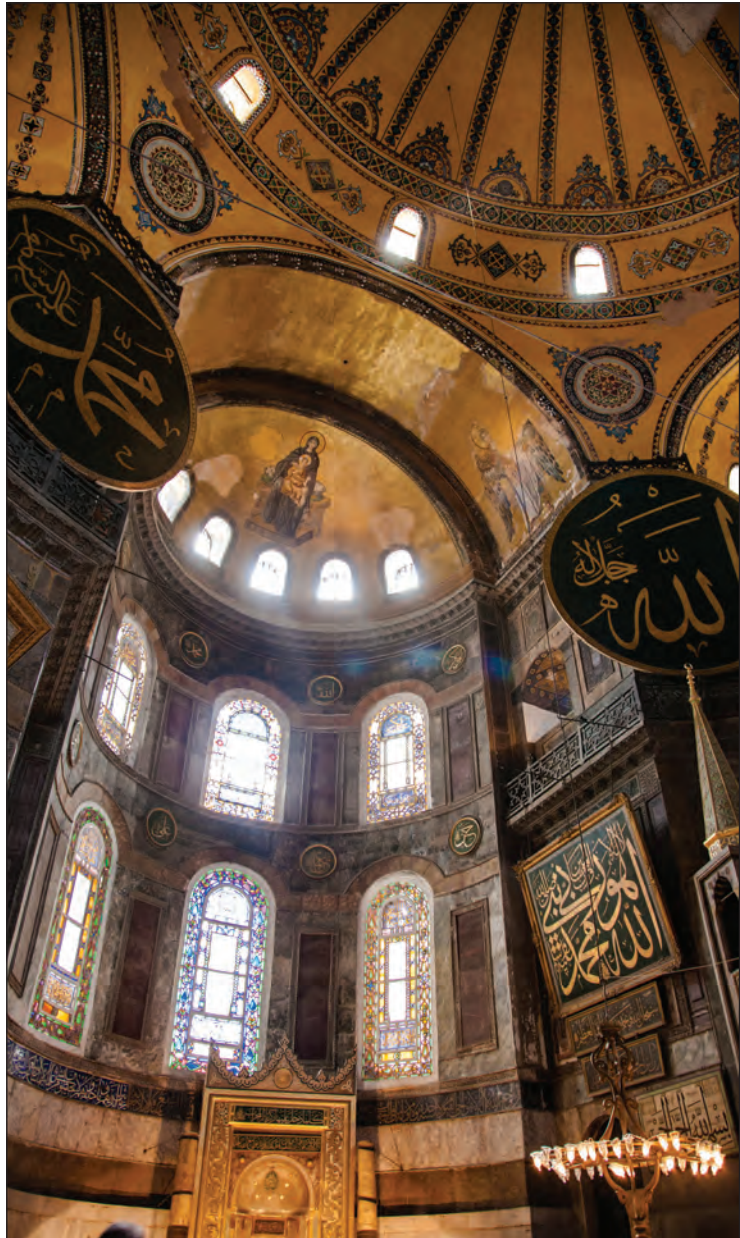




EXPLORING ISTANBUL

travel tip

Want to know more about the history and culture of Istanbul? Pick up a copy of *Istanbul: A Cultural History* by Peter Clarke (published by Signal Books, Oxford, UK, 2010) or *Constantinople: City of the World's Desire 1453-1924* by Philip Mansel (published by John Murray, London, UK, 2006).



Hagia Sophia, a former Orthodox patriarchal basilica (church), and later a mosque, is now a popular museum.



cisterns and then gaze in wonder at the huge feat of engineering—the Valens aqueduct—that fed the cisterns with water sourced from the Belgrade forests 20 km north of Istanbul.

Discover the remains of Istanbul's centuries old city walls, punctuated by enormous towers and immense gates, stretching all the way from Yedikule on the Sea of Marmara to Ayvansaray on the Golden Horn and imagine the great battles that they have witnessed.

Stroll along the banks of the Bosphorus and marvel at the variety and number of vessels plying their trade up and down the waters of Istanbul and hop on one at Eminönü to get a different perspective on the city.

And when you're done, sit in one of Istanbul's 1,001 cafés, restaurants or bars and consider all that you have seen and all that remains to be explored in this great city—the art, the music, the food and more, much more!

The Galata Tower stands proud above Beyoğlu.

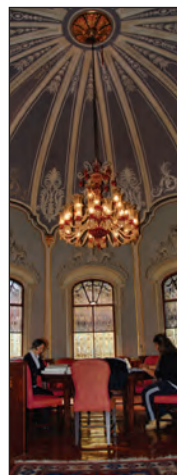
101 THINGS TO SEE & DO | **introduction**





The city where two worlds meet

Istanbul is not just Turkey's most populous city, it is also the country's economic, cultural and historical heart. Straddling the Bosphorus, one of the world's busiest waterways, Istanbul bridges Asia and Europe both physically and culturally. This is a city where East and West don't just meet, but converge in happy coexistence. Historic palaces stand alongside concrete and glass office towers, designer-clad women pass others in traditional attire, local street markets compete with Western-style malls. Join us as we explore the best of what Istanbul has to offer!



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An aerial photograph of the Sultanahmet district in Istanbul, Turkey. The image shows a dense urban area with a mix of historical and modern buildings. The Hagia Sophia and the Blue Mosque are prominent landmarks. The Bosphorus Strait is visible in the background, with the city of Istanbul extending across the water. The text 'Sultanahmet including Seraglio Point' is overlaid on the image in a large, white, sans-serif font.

Sultanahmet

including Seraglio Point

To step foot into the Sultanahmet district of Istanbul is to walk into a history lesson, for at every turn is another monument, museum or mosque giving testament to a different era, be it Byzantine, Ottoman or Republican. Here, minarets jostle for space beside church domes and palace walls. Ancient is juxtaposed against modern creating an enticing patchwork of sights and sounds waiting to be discovered down winding alleyways, in breathtaking buildings and along mysterious underground cisterns. Covering little more than two square kilometres, visitors are sure to be lost in their imagination in Sultanahmet, though never lose their way.

1 Sultanahmet (Blue) Mosque


No visit to Istanbul is complete without a tour of the famed Sultanahmet or Blue Mosque. Commissioned by Sultan Ahmet I and designed and built by Mehmet Ağa between 1609 and 1616, its six minarets and extravagant domes were unheard of outside of Mecca at the time. Certainly the splendour of the domed interior will leave you speechless—an estimated 20,000 blue, green, white and red İznik tiles, depicting carnations, tulips, roses and trees, were used to decorate the mosque's interior. The main 23.5m wide dome is surrounded by a cascade of domes and semi-domes, all painted with intricate arabesque designs. Don't miss the white marble *minbar* used by the imam during Friday prayers. Its delicate carving makes it one of the finest of 17th century Istanbul.

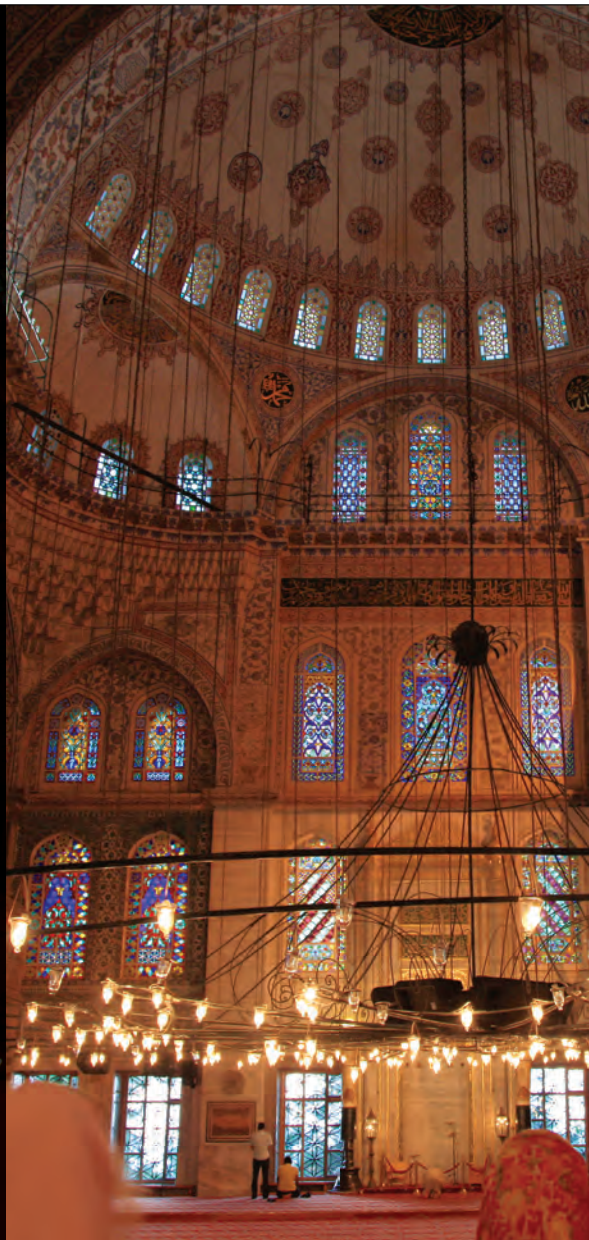
TRAM STOP: Sultanahmet

OPEN: Daily. (Closed to visitors at prayer times)

GPS: N41 00.365 E28 58.630

For more information:

 0212 458 0776



traveltip

For one of the best views of the Blue Mosque and Haghia Sophia, dine at the Seven Hills Hotel rooftop fish restaurant (Tel: 0212 517 1085; sevenhillsbalikcisi.com). The fantastic 360° view will be a lasting reminder of your visit to Istanbul. From here, you can also peek into the grounds of the Four Seasons Hotel (Tel: 0212 402 3000), formerly a women's prison built in the early 20th century in a Turkish neoclassical style.



traveltip

Bus stops for city sightseeing, hop-on, hop-off bus tours are a few steps from the entrance to the Tomb of Sultan Ahmet I. You can sit by the fountain in Sultanahmet Meydanı (Sultanahmet Square) while you wait for your ride. The fountain is particularly attractive at night when the water jets are illuminated and change colours.



2 Tomb of Sultan Ahmet I

A combination of vivid green shrouded tombs, blue and white 17th century İznik tiles and dazzling stained glass windows make the Tomb of Sultan Ahmet I a beautiful sight, well worth a visit. Although it is part of the Blue Mosque complex, the entrance is outside the mosque courtyard from Mimar Mehmet Ağa Caddesi, opposite the fountain in Sultanahmet Meydanı (Sultanahmet Square). And, if you'd like to visit more tombs and mausoleums, pick up a copy of the Map of Tombs of Istanbul - it shows the location of some 115 tombs in the city and its environs.

TRAM STOP: Sultanahmet

OPEN: Daily 8.30-16.00. Closed Monday

GPS: N41 00.423 E28 58.650


traveltip

During Ramadan and at other festival times, the streets around the Hippodrome and Blue Mosque come alive with market stalls and entertainment. Wait until the break of fast at sunset and join in the celebrations.

3 Hippodrome

It's easy to overlook the Hippodrome in Istanbul and you're going to have to use your imagination because very little is left of what was once a gigantic stadium that stood at the heart of the Byzantine city of Constantinople. Built in the 3rd century AD and thought to have been capable of holding up to 100,000 people, the Hippodrome must have been an incredible sight in its heyday. Today the area is laid out as a rectangular public park and it's hard to believe that chariot races were once held here! Three relics of the Roman era remain; an Egyptian obelisk built about 1500BC and transported to Constantinople, the Serpentine Column dating from the 5th century BC shipped from Delphi and the Column of Constantine of unknown date.

TRAM STOP: Sultanahmet

GPS: N41 00.354 E28 58.527

traveltip

Turkish coffee is part of the fabric of everyday life in Turkey. Enjoy a traditional Turkish coffee experience at the small café in the courtyard of the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Art. In a 30 minute programme, you'll learn about coffee bean roasting, coffee making, and coffee serving rituals (and of course sample the best cup of Turkish coffee!)



4 Museum of Turkish and Islamic Art


Housed in the restored Ibrahim Pasha Palace, this spectacular exhibition of over 40,000 items, covering every period and genre of Islamic art, is an Istanbul treasure not to be missed. While the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Art's main claim to fame is its outstanding collection of antique carpets and kilims, there are also beautiful Koran boxes and stands inlaid with mother of pearl, fascinating calligraphic manuscripts and miniatures and an interesting ethnographic section, all clearly described in English and Turkish. Don't miss the stunning guilt Tugra (seal) of Sultan Osman III.

TRAM STOP: Sultanahmet

OPEN: Daily 9.00-16.30. Closed Monday

GPS: N41 00.351 E28 58.500

For more information:

 0212 518 18 05

 www.tiem.gov.tr


traveltip

Want to learn more about Turkish history and culture? Then stop in and browse the hundreds of titles at Bookshop!— probably Istanbul's best English language book store (tel: 0212 511 7380; bookshopistanbul.com). With two branches on Divan Yolu Caddesi near the Sultanahmet tram stop, you're sure to find what you're looking for, be it books on Turkish culture, architecture, cuisine, history, art or language.

5 Felt making


If you've been to a performance of the Whirling Dervish, you're sure to have noticed the tall, brown felt hats (known as *sikke*) worn by the dervish. Find out how they're made at the Ikonium Studio in Sultanahmet where Master Felter Mehmet Girgiç demonstrates the traditional felt art form of *keçe*. The studio's shop is full of felt art pieces and clothing and, as Mehmet was named a UNESCO Living Human Treasure in 2010, you'll be taking home a true work of art. If you'd like to try felt making for yourself, contact the shop where workshops are held for individuals or small groups, even at short notice.

TRAM STOP: Sultanahmet

OPEN: Daily

GPS: N41 00.442 E28 58.426

For more information:

 0212 518 7353

 www.ikoniumstudio.blogspot.com

traveltip

Along Divan Yolu, in stark contrast to the modern shops, you'll find a number of interesting tombs and former medreses (religious colleges) to visit. For example, in Çorlulu Alipaşa Medresesi, between Çemberlitaş and Beyazıt tram stops, you'll find carpets and rugs at one entrance and a host of shisha cafés at the other!



6 Divan Yolu

Formerly the ancient Mese (meaning Middle Way), Divan Yolu—the main thoroughfare of Constantinople—is now a modern shopping street that starts in Sultanahmet and extends to the Bazaar Quarter and beyond. Day or night this is always a busy street with buses, cars, trams and pedestrians sharing the space. Ride the tram or walk to Constantine's Column at Çemberlitaş (meaning hooped column). This 35m high column was constructed in AD330 as part of the celebrations to inaugurate the new Byzantine capital. It derives its name from the metal rings used to reinforce it.

TRAM STOP: Sultanahmet

GPS: N41 00.508 E28 58.294


traveltip

Remember to wear sensible shoes when visiting the Cistern as the floor can be slippery from the humidity and dripping water. Have a cup of tea at the cistern's underground café with perhaps one of the most unique views in the world. If you're lucky, there may be a performance on the underground stage! If you'd like to see more, visit the 1001 Cistern (Binbir Direk Sarnıcı) which has been emptied of water and converted into a venue for gala events.

7 Basilica Cistern (Yerebatan Sarnıcı)

As you descend the 52 steps into the Basilica Cistern, you'll be amazed by the sight before you: a vast subterranean cavern capable of storing 100 million litres of water with 336 nine-metre high columns, lined up across the space. Water was brought by the Romans from the Belgrade woods 19km north of Istanbul via the Valens Aqueduct. With muted lighting and soft music mixed with the sound of dripping water, be prepared to be transported into a mystical world in this “underground palace”, as it is known in Turkish. The artificial walkways lead visitors round the cistern to two columns which have Medusa heads for bases, and a nearby column with peacock eyes or ‘tears’ running down it.

TRAM STOP: Sultanahmet

OPEN: Daily 9.00-17.30

GPS: N41 00.511 E28 58.696

For more information:  0212 522 1259  www.yerebatan.com

traveltip

Make Hagia Sophia the first stop of your day if you want to avoid long queues. Happily, in the summer there are usually street performers and hawker stalls in front of Hagia Sophia to help pass the time in the lineup!



8 Hagia Sophia (Ayasofya)

The spectacular Hagia Sophia (Church of Holy Wisdom)—now a museum—is high on “must see in Istanbul” lists for good reason. Built 1,400 years ago in the reign of Emperor Justinian in 537, it makes a dramatic statement on the city’s skyline with its mix of outstanding Byzantine architecture and 15th century Ottoman additions. Visitors are sure to be overwhelmed by the sheer size and scale of the building with its huge domed interior adorned with figurative mosaics. They can judge for themselves how successfully minarets and ablution fountains blend with nave and apse.

TRAM STOP: Sultanahmet

OPEN: Daily 9.00-18.00. Closed Monday

GPS: N41 00.485 E28 58.719

For more information:

 0212 522 1750

 www.ayasofyamuzesi.gov.tr/en


traveltip

Don't worry if you've never been to a Turkish bath. Choose one in the Sultanahmet, such as the recently restored Ayasofya Hurrem Sultan Hamam (tel: 0212 517 3535; ayasofyahamami.com), Çemberlitaş Hamam tel: 0212 522 7974; cemberlitashamami.com.tr), Cağaloğlu Hamam (tel: 0212 522 2424; cagalogluhamami.com.tr) or the Süleymaniye Hamam for couples only (tel: 0212 519 5569; suleymaniyehamami.com.tr) close to the mosque of the same name. All have attendants that are used to tourists and English is spoken. Alternatively, many 5-star hotels have spas with a hamam section open to non-guests. Try the tranquil Spa and Wellness centre at Rixos Pera Istanbul in Beyoğlu (tel: 0212 377 7000; rixos.com). You don't need to bring anything except a tired body in need of rejuvenation!

9 Turkish Bath

A scrub and a massage at a Turkish bath is just what the doctor ordered after a long day's sightseeing in Istanbul. With so many establishments to choose from, it can be a bit daunting for a first-timer, so ask at your hotel for a recommendation. Most Turkish baths will have separate facilities for men and women, sometimes at opposite sides of the building or operating at different times. You'll be welcomed and swiftly ushered to your changing room. Then, wrapped in a towel or dressed in shorts and T-shirt like attire supplied by the baths, you'll be escorted into a large steam room centered on a massage slab. Here, your attendant will massage away all your aches and pains. Whether you go for a basic package or a more exotic treatment, be sure to leave your cares at the door!

TRAM STOP: Sultanahmet

OPEN: Daily, usually 8.00-22.00

traveltip

Next door to the Istanbul Craft Centre, you'll find the Yeşil Ev Hotel (tel: 0212 517 6785; yesilev.com.tr). The hotel was built on the site of a wooden mansion that was so far beyond repair that it had to be torn down and reconstructed. The present hotel is a replica of the original mansion and its 19 rooms are furnished in 19th century Ottoman style. The hotel has a pretty courtyard at the rear with a pleasant shaded café.



10 Istanbul Craft Centre


Behind the doors of an unassuming former Koranic College at the rear of the Baths of Roxanne, there's a small courtyard which houses the Istanbul Craft Centre. Each room around the edge of the courtyard showcases a different Turkish handicraft. Depending on the time of day, you may see skilled artisans at work painting the detail on a porcelain plate, sewing a traditional doll, finishing a beautiful page of calligraphy or making a delicate piece of Ottoman style jewellery. All the artwork is for sale so why not buy a piece of Turkish Craftwork from the artist herself?

TRAM STOP: Sultanahmet

OPEN: Daily 9.30–17.30

GPS: N41 00.390 E28 58.716

For more information:

 0212 517 6784


traveltip

If carpets and handicrafts are not your thing and you're more of a high-end fashion person, then head to the Nişantaşı area of Istanbul (10 minute walk from Osmanbey Metro Station). It's the place to see and be seen; a wealthy neighbourhood with a luxury boutique hotel, an elegant spa and some of Istanbul's finest art galleries and restaurants. So if you're looking for a Louis Vuitton bag or a Gucci watch head to Nişantaşı with your credit card!

11 Cavalry Bazaar (Arasta Çarşı)

Formerly a stable yard, Cavalry Bazaar (also known as Arasta Çarşı) behind the Blue Mosque is a real find. With shops brimming with beautiful carpets, handicrafts, porcelain and jewellery, you're sure to find something you want to bargain for. But don't forget the size of your budget. Shop owners will suddenly become your best friend and offer you tea and a chat and it's easy to get carried away and spend way more than you want! As night falls, the courtyard just in front of the bazaar comes alive with music and draws in people who come to chat over a coffee or a light meal.

TRAM STOP: Sultanahmet

OPEN: Daily

GPS: N41 00.330 E28 58.702

traveltip

Istanbul has places to stay that suit all budgets. From world class 5-star luxury hotels to special-licence hotels in renovated old buildings that may not have a lift, such as the charming Hotel Esans (tel: 0212 516 1902; esanshotel.com), and backpackers' hostels like Secondhome Hostel (tel: 0212 512 5790; secondhomehostel.com) that provide no-frills accommodation, you're sure to find what you're looking for. Remember to book early during high season to get the best deals in your preferred location. Hali Hotel (tel: 0212 5162170; halihotel.com) and Hatay Hotel (tel: 0212 527 0404; hatayhotels.com) have great locations in the Sultanahmet and are reasonably priced.



12 Museum of Mosaics


Hidden behind the Arasta Bazaar, the Museum of Mosaics (Mozaik Müzesi) is easily missed by visitors if they get caught up haggling in the bazaar. But to overlook this superb display of mosaics from the Great Palace of the Byzantine Emperors would be a mistake. While only a few of the hundreds of mosaics have survived, those remaining cover an area of 1,872 m², making it one of the largest preserved mosaics in Europe. You'll see images of pastoral settings with familiar animals and pictures of mythological stories with mysterious creatures. Young and old will enjoy trying to find a griffin eating a lizard, a child feeding a donkey and a fight between a lion and a tiger!

TRAM STOP: Sultanahmet

OPEN: Daily 9.00-18.00. Closed Monday

GPS: N41 00.275 E28 58.679

For more information:

 0212 518 1205

 www.muze.gov.tr/mosaic


travel tip

The ruins of Bucoleon Palace aren't far from the Church of Saints Sergius and Bacchus but may take some finding. Ask for directions if you don't want to risk a fruitless hunt along the ancient sea wall that lines the shore of the Sea of Marmara. The ruins are the creeper covered section of stonework within the wall, punctuated by three large marble window frames. It's hard to believe this was once part of the wall of the Great Palace of the Byzantine emperors in the 6th century!

13 Church of Saints Sergius & Bacchus

This irregular octagonal shaped church, now a mosque called Küçük Ayasofya Camii or Little Haghia Sophia, has a nonsensical feel to it with odd shapes and unusual corners inside and out. Many think this is one of the most charming churches in the city and if you don't want to queue to see its larger namesake then consider a visit here as an alternative. Founded by Emperor Justinian and his Empress Theodora in 527 a few years before Haghia Sophia, it was converted to a mosque in 1453. Opposite the church, you'll find an old medrese that now houses local artisans. Stop by Ahmet Sezen's workshop to see an expert at mother of pearl inlay at work (tel: 0212 516 3453; www.sedefkar.com).

TRAM STOP: Sultanahmet

OPEN: Daily

GPS: N41 00.171 E28 58.322

traveltip

Before entering the Topkapı Palace, spend a few moments at the Fountain of Ahmet III, just outside the main entrance to the first courtyard. Its grandeur and ornate decoration makes it the finest fountain in Istanbul and one of the few monuments to survive Sultan Ahmet III's violent disposition. Built in 1729, its style is typical of an Ottoman fountain and may surprise visitors who are expecting the great jets of water typical of European fountains.



14 Topkapı Palace (Topkapı Sarayı)


One of the most visited attractions in Istanbul, the Topkapı Palace is sure to delight both casual tourists and avid Ottoman historians. It features ornate architecture, dazzling İznik tiles, inspiring religious artefacts, glittering jewellery, beautiful gardens and stunning vistas. Constructed in the 15th century by Sultan Mehmet II, it was the residence of the Ottoman sultans and also the administrative and educational centre of the state until the middle of the 19th century. With a museum laid out over four courtyards, there is a mass of things to see. Set out early to cover it all and expect to gasp in amazement at every turn!

TRAM STOP: Sultanahmet

OPEN: Daily 9.00-16.00. Closed Tuesday

GPS: N41 00.512 E28 58.880

For more information:

 0212 512 0480

 www.Topkapisarayi.gov.tr


travel tip

Unfortunately Hagia Eirena is only open by special permission. However, it is a concert venue during the International Istanbul Music Festival. For complete listings about music and cultural events throughout Istanbul, look for copies of *The Guide Istanbul* (theguideistanbul.com); *Timeout Istanbul* (timeout.com/istanbul) or *Where Istanbul* (whereistanbul.com.tr).

15 Hagia Eirena

Located in the first courtyard of Topkapı Palace and a short walk from the Imperial Gate entrance, Hagia Eirena (Aya İrini Kilisesi) is thought to stand on the site of the oldest place of Christian worship in Istanbul. This magnificent Byzantine Church, in the red and white brickwork typical of the era, has a simple black mosaic cross on a gold background above five rows of built-in seats in the apse, a feature not seen in any other surviving Byzantine church in the city. It is also the only pre-Ottoman conquest church not converted into a mosque.

TRAM STOP: Sultanahmet

OPEN: By special permission and for concerts

GPS: N41 00.594 E28 58.883

traveltip

To beat the crowds, go straight to the harem on arrival at the Topkapı Palace, otherwise by midday you'll have a long wait in line! There's a small café close to the exit of the harem for tea and a cake before heading to see the rest of the palace. Opt for a guided tour or use an audio guide to hear the fascinating stories about day to day life in the harem.



16 Harem (in Topkapı Palace)


Enter the harem and you enter a world of intrigue and mystery, a realm that was practically closed to the outside world for centuries. Here the sultan's wives, concubines and children lived in splendid isolation, guarded by black slave eunuchs, with the sultan and his sons the only other men allowed access to the harem. With more than 300 rooms, nine bath houses and two mosques all extravagantly decorated, there is much to explore in the harem, the name derived from the Arabic word for forbidden. At the very least, you're sure to have your breath taken away by the amazing İznik tiles set out in some of the most beautiful designs in Turkey!

TRAM STOP: Sultanahmet

OPEN: Daily 9.00-16.00. Closed Tuesday

GPS: N41 00.512 E28 58.880

For more information:

 0212 512 0480

 www.Topkapisarayi.gov.tr


traveltip

Photos are not allowed in the exhibition sections of the Topkapı Palace, so buy a guidebook at one of the palace's gift shops to help you tell your friends about your visit. And there's a café overlooking the Golden Horn where you can sit and write your postcards inspired by the view!

17 Palace Collections & Pavilions

Topkapı Palace is home to a staggering array of treasures collected by the sultans over a 470-year period. Many are diplomatic gifts, some were commissioned by the sultans and others were treasures acquired from successful military campaigns. Don't miss the glittering gems, the luxurious imperial costumes, the fascinating European clocks, and the fabulous collection of ceramics, glass and silverware. Along the way, you can explore the Palace Pavilions, including the Baghdad Pavilion, adorned with intricate tile work, the Circumcision Pavilion decorated with tiles inside and out, and the Yerevan Pavilion with vaulted ceiling painted with hand drawn designs in gold leaf.

TRAM STOP: Sultanahmet

OPEN: Daily 9.00-16.00. Closed Tuesday

Timings vary for the collections within Topkapı

GPS: N41 00.512 E28 58.880

For more information: 📞 0212 512 0480

🌐 www.Topkapisarayi.gov.tr

travel tip

Listen for the *hafiz* (those who have completely memorized the Qur'an) reciting the Qur'an in front of the Holy Mantle of the Prophet—a practice that began when Sultan Selim the Grim had the Mantle brought to the Privy Council.



Picture: Giovanni Dall'Orto

18 The Chamber of the Holy Relics


Home to some of the holiest relics of Islam, the Chamber of the Holy Relics, located within the Privy room, is a place of pilgrimage for Muslims. The Chamber contains religious objects sent to Ottoman Sultans between the 16th and 19th century, the most important of which are the Holy Mantle (*Hırka-i Şerif*) of the Prophet Mohammed, the hair from the Prophet's beard, a letter written by the Prophet, and the bow of the Prophet. There are also relics attributed to other prophets and to companions of the Prophet, together with religious items from Mecca. Visitors are not allowed into the room where the Holy Mantle is stored but may view it from an antechamber through an open doorway.

TRAM STOP: Sultanahmet

OPEN: Daily 9.00-16.00. Closed Tuesday

GPS: N41 00.512 E28 58.880

For more information:

 0212 512 0480

 www.Topkapisarayi.gov.tr


traveltip

Soğukçeşme Sokağı, or cold fountain street, is named after the fountain at the street's end nearest to the entrance to Gülhane Park. It's also only a short walk from there to the archaeological museum.

19 The street that has it all

Istanbul is a treasure trove of historical and cultural finds laid out in well-known museums, religious buildings and galleries across the city. But turn off the main thoroughfares and you'll uncover another side to Istanbul. Try, for example, Alemdar Caddesi, a steep cobbled road leading in to Soğukçeşme Sokağı running behind Hagia Sophia. Here, you'll find a monumental baroque gate that marks the entrance to the old Hagia Sophia alms house, the hidden art gallery of İlhami Atalay (tel: 0212 520 1083; www.ilhamiatalay.com) which is full of quirky and original works of art, Sarnic Restaurant (tel: 0212 512 4291; www.sarnicrestaurant.com) located in an underground Roman Cistern, and a row of recreated wooden houses, Ayasofya Konakları, typical of architecture of the late 19th century.

TRAM STOP: Sultanahmet

GPS: N41 00.609 E28 58.747

traveltip

Just around the corner from Caferağa Medresesi, gourmands may sample Ottoman Palace cuisine at the Matbah restaurant in Ottoman Hotel Imperial (tel: 0212 513 6150; ottomanhotelimperial.com). The recipes are thoroughly researched from evidence found in Istanbul palace archives and from palace historians. The menu changes according to the season and each item is dated to indicate the oldest written source from which the recipe was taken—for example, Kaz Kebabi (goose kebab) from 1539. There's nowhere else in Istanbul to try this unique cuisine that is steeped in history in every sense!



20 Caferağa Medresesi

Everywhere you turn in Istanbul, you'll see examples of the arts and crafts that the region is famous for. From calligraphy to ebru (marbling), mosaics to porcelain, needlework to jewellery... there's something to suit every taste. If you'd like to try your hand at one of the many Turkish arts and crafts, Caferağa Medresesi is a good place to visit. Set in a pretty courtyard, the original school was built by Mimar Sinan in 1559 and was restored in 1989. With group and private classes designed for all ages and abilities you're sure to come away with your own work of art. Stay after class and enjoy a snack at the café in the central courtyard of this tranquil location.

TRAM STOP: Sultanahmet

OPEN: Daily. Closed Monday

GPS: N41 00.570 E28 58.745

For more information:

 0212 513 3601 / 02

 www.caferagamedresesi.com


traveltip

Many museums and places of interest in Istanbul have a downloadable mobile phone application that provides commentary for visitors at a small charge. Check each museum's website before you visit or look for the sign on arrival. You may also pay extra for an audio guide which will give you a comprehensive interpretation of the place you are visiting in the language of your choice. Alternatively, join a guided tour given by a licenced guide.

21 Archaeological Museum

Archaeological museums are boring, right? Well the Archaeological Museum in Istanbul might just prove you wrong! Not only does it have one of the most extensive collections of classical artefacts dating back to the Ottoman Empire, but there is also a superb collection of Turkish tiles and ceramics housed in the Çinili Pavilion, which is itself clad in the famous blue and white İznik tiles. With four floors to explore, you could spend hours at the archaeological museum. For an adventure through the whole building, set your children the task of finding the bronze snake's head that fits on to the remains of the serpentine column in the Hippodrome. You can wait in the museum's pleasant courtyard café while they explore!

TRAM STOP: Gülhane

OPEN: Daily 9.00-19.00. Closed Monday

GPS: N41 00.686 E28 58.818

For more information:

 0212 520 77 40/41

 www.istanbularkeoloji.gov.tr

traveltip

Dotted around the streets of the Sultanahmet, you'll find hawker stalls selling delicious street food. If dinner is a while away, buy a Simit—similar to a very large pretzel—to munch on while you walk from one end of Gülhane Park to the other.



22 Gülhane Park

After a long morning sightseeing, there's nothing better than to relax and unwind in a green space in the late afternoon sunshine. And, if you're in the Sultanahmet district, Gülhane Park is the place to be! Children will love to run and play in this grassy, child-friendly park with a large playground. For the less energetic, sit a while on one of the many shaded benches and contemplate what it must have been like here in Ottoman times when the park was the lower grounds of the Topkapı Palace. If you're up for it, walk to the far end of the park where there's a terrace of cafés and a great view of the busy sea passage where the Golden Horn meets the Bosphorus.

TRAM STOP: Gülhane

OPEN: Daily

GPS: N41 00.652 E28 58.737


traveltip

If you're looking for somewhere for quiet study, then the reading room of the Literature Museum Library is the place to go. The room overlooks Gülhane Park which is sure to give you the inspiration you're looking for!

23 Istanbul Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar Literature Museum Library

Named after Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, one of Turkey's foremost 20th century novelists, this library will delight all admirers of Turkish literature. Housed in the beautifully restored 19th century alay köşkü (procession kiosk) set into the outer walls of the Topkapı Palace, the museum is a treasure trove of more than 7,500 books together with memorabilia formerly owned by Turkey's literary giants. The Turkish literati gathered in the kiosk in the 1930s to discuss issues of the day and it is fitting that the downstairs of the library is a delightfully furnished meeting room to this day. While most of the books are in Turkish, the restored building is well worth a visit.

TRAM STOP: Gülhane

OPEN: Daily 10.00–19.00. Closed Monday **GPS:** N41 00.649 E28 58.729

For more information: 📞 0212 520 2081

🌐 www.kultur.gov.tr

traveltip

In order to preserve delicate items on display, some tourist attractions in Istanbul do not allow photography. To avoid disappointment and embarrassment, ask if it's OK to take pictures before you click and buy a photography permit, if required, when you purchase your entrance ticket.



24 Istanbul Museum of the History of Science & Technology in Islam

Housed in the former Topkapı Palace stables in Gülhane Park, the museum exhibits aim to show how Islamic advances in science and technology preceded and greatly influenced those in Europe. Opened in May 2008, it includes reconstructions of historical instruments and tools from the 9th through to the 17th centuries in fields such as astronomy, geography, time measurement, geometry, optics, medicine, chemistry and physics. Children will particularly enjoy video recordings showing reconstructions of Islamic inventions and scientific experiments.

TRAM STOP: Gülhane

OPEN: Daily 9.00-16.30. Closed Tuesday

GPS: N41 00.789 E28 58.750

For more information:

 0212 528 8065

 www.ibttm.org


traveltip

Many shops in Istanbul will take Euros or Turkish lira but if you need to change money and you don't have a bank card, the most convenient option is to use one of the many Bureau de Change kiosks dotted around Istanbul. Exchange rates are set by the Turkish Central Bank, although you will find slight variations across the city depending on how close you are to a tourist spot!

25 City bus tours

If you're short on time and want to get a flavour of several areas of Istanbul in one go, then why not hop on one of the sightseeing bus tours of the city? Head for the top deck on the double-decker buses for the best views of Istanbul's many sights around the Golden Horn and along the Bosphorus in Europe and Asia. Day or night it's one of the easiest ways to get around, particularly if you're travelling with small children or anyone who finds hills and cobbled streets a challenge. Buses depart frequently from the edge of the square outside Hagia Sophia in Sultanahmet and the great thing is that you can hop on and off wherever you like along the bus route!

OPEN: Starts 10.00 every hour on the hour

GPS: N41 00.459 E28 58.718



The Bazaar Quarter

including Eminönü

Spreading from the edge of the Sultanahmet down towards the shores of the Golden Horn in a jumble of streets, alleyways and courtyards, the Bazaar Quarter of Istanbul is a chaotic yet charming district that won't disappoint those looking for a bargain or simply to enjoy the hubbub of an 'east-meets-west' market experience. From the glorious Grand Bazaar with its myriad of shops to the enticing Egyptian Bazaar filled with exotic aromas and the fascinating Book Bazaar, uncountable shopping choices are laid across a patchwork of streets. Hidden among this hive of commercial activity, visitors will find some of the most beautiful mosques in Istanbul including the famous Süleymaniye Mosque Complex and the exquisite Rüstem Paşa Mosque.

traveltip

While you wait for your boat trip, why not try a fish sandwich from one of the floating restaurant grills by Galata Bridge? Simply delicious!



26 Boat Trip on the Bosphorus

No visit to Istanbul would be complete without a cruise on the Bosphorus. Depending on your budget, choose from the more expensive option of a pre-arranged guided tour complete with commentary, or a cheaper trip—usually without commentary—given by one of the companies touting for business in Eminönü Square and the Sultanahmet area. Most tours head up the western side of the Bosphorus to Fatih Sultan Mehmet Bridge and back down the opposite bank so be sure to change sides halfway through the trip for the best views. Look out for the elegant villas, or *yalis*, built by wealthy citizens of Istanbul since the 17th century—the ultimate in waterfront properties! For a different perspective on the Istanbul skyline, consider a night-time dinner cruise.

TRAM STOP: Eminönü

OPEN: Day or night


traveltip

With so much going on in Eminönü Square, it's hard to know where to look. Buy some seeds to feed the pigeons or sample something from one of the many hawker stalls selling *simit* (a type of Turkish bread), grilled corn on the cob, roasted chestnuts and more.

27 New Mosque (Yeni Cami)

Once resting at the water's edge, the New Mosque, completed in the mid-17th century, dominates the skyline at the southern end of Galata Bridge. Its blue and grey domes appear to cascade down towards the water. A steep flight of steps leads into a magnificent arched courtyard centred on a hexagonal fountain where the faithful perform their ablutions before entering the mosque. Inside the blue, white and turquoise tiles that adorn every surface are examples of İznik tiles from the 17th century. Look up at the ornate domes to see how the architect cleverly supported the main dome on four half domes and four enormous columns. And don't miss the Sultan's private alcove to the upper left of the prayer hall which is famous for its opulence.

TRAM STOP: Eminönü

OPEN: Daily

GPS: N41 01.038 E28 58.280

travel tip

If the Republic's First Bank museum has whetted your appetite for all things financial, then a trip to the Ottoman Bank museum (tel: 0212 334 2270; obmuseum.com) on Voyvoda Street in Karaköy is a must. Here, arranged around the bank's vault, you'll find an informative museum that charts the history and operation of the bank over an 80 year period from 1856 to 1936. During this period, it was the Central Bank, bank of issue, and treasurer of the Ottoman Empire.



28 Museum of the Republic's First Bank (İşbank Museum)

A few steps from the New Mosque, the Museum of the Republic's First Bank gives a fascinating insight into the economic and social development of Turkey over the almost 90 year history of the bank. With displays of documents, banking tools, communication devices, photographs, artworks, movies and more, the museum charts the financial institution's development since its foundation in 1924. Although the displays are mostly in Turkish, don't let this put you off—there's a free audio guide in English giving a comprehensive description of the museum's contents.

TRAM STOP: Eminönü

OPEN: Daily 10.00-18.00. Closed Monday

GPS: N41 00.995 E28 58.384

For more information: 📞 0212 511 1331

🌐 www.muze.isbank.com.tr


travel tip

Turn left out of the entrance of the Hodjapasha Culture Centre and left again and you'll find yourself on a street called Hocapaşa Hamami Sokak which is filled with restaurants and cafés, perfect for an after-performance meal! At most times of the day, you'll see Turks playing backgammon while sipping their coffees.

29 Hodjapasha Culture Centre for Turkish Dance

Hidden in the back streets of the Sirkeci district just below Sultanahmet, the Hodjapasha Culture Centre is housed in a converted 550 year old Turkish Bath. Here, visitors can enjoy an exotic dance performance showcasing dances from different regions of Turkey and the breathtaking Sema Ceremony featuring whirling dervish. There's a fascinating exhibition describing the dance traditions of Turkey. If your appetite for dance has been awakened, you can sign up for a workshop or a private Turkish dance lesson.

TRAM STOP: Sirkeci

OPEN: Whirling Dervish performance – 19.30 every day except Tuesday & Thursday;
Turkish dance performance – 20:00 Tuesday & Thursday, 21.00 Saturday & Sunday

GPS: N41 00.851 E28 58.543

For more information: 📞 0212 511 4626 🌐 www.hodjapasha.com

traveltip

There's a tourist information centre to the left of the entrance to Sirkeci Station where you'll find helpful staff who'll be delighted to set you on your way.



30 Sirkeci Station & Railway Museum


Built between 1888 and 1890, Sirkeci station was once the end station of the original Orient Express. Now servicing suburban Istanbul and other parts of Turkey and Europe, there are two reasons for visiting the station if you're not planning a trip by rail. First, pop into the Orient Express Café and imagine travel in days gone by. Second, check out the free Railway Museum. Although it is small, train enthusiasts will be interested in the rail memorabilia including a silver service set from the Orient Express, train signs, ticket punches, station clocks and more.

TRAM STOP: Sirkeci

OPEN: Museum 9.00–17.00; closed Sunday and Monday

GPS: N41 00.891 E028 58.572

For more information:

 0212 520 6575


traveltip

Don't overlook the fresh produce market running down the outside of the Spice Bazaar into Eminönü Square. It's a great place to stock up your picnic basket with delicious Turkish delicacies!

31 Egyptian/Spice Bazaar (Mısır Çarşısı)

Don't let the crush of people entering the Spice (or Egyptian) Bazaar put you off! This is all part of the experience and somehow the throng moves in an orderly fashion. Here, your senses will go into overdrive, bombarded with rich aromas, dazzling colours, tantalising tastes and a cacophony of sounds. With stalls piled high with spices, dried fruits, honey, nuts, teas and sweet meats and much more from Turkey, the Orient and beyond, you'll not know which way to turn and from which persuasive stall holder to buy!

TRAM STOP: Eminönü

OPEN: Daily 8.00-19.00. Closed Sunday

GPS: N41 01.032 E28 58.275

travel tip

Just down the alley from Rüstem Paşa Mosque towards the Spice Bazaar, stop by the shop Kurukahveci Mehmet Efendi (tel: 0212 522 0080; mehmetefendi.com). Here, you can buy the highest quality coffee beans from Istanbul's oldest coffee house which has been roasting beans since 1871. But be prepared to wait as the line can be very long at this popular shop! Later, try the delicious kebabs at the tiny Ocakbaşı (meaning 'stand at the grill') kebab shop (tel: 0212 526 3229) where the meat is cooked on an open grill in front of you. The locals love it and you will too!



32 Rüstem Paşa Mosque

Mosque minarets can be seen at every turn in Istanbul so it's not surprising to find one perched above the shops and warehouses that spill out around the Spice Bazaar. Though you'll have to look closely to find the entrance of the Rüstem Paşa Mosque, you'll be glad you didn't give up because the mosque, built by the great architect Sinan for Rüstem Paşa's son-in-law and grand vizier to Süleyman, is exceptional for its superb tiles—almost every wall, both inside and out, is covered with the highest quality İznik tiles in floral and abstract designs. It was also designed with as many windows as the structure would support, making the inside light and airy. Look for a tile on the outside wall of the mosque. It shows an image of the Kaaba in Mecca as it appeared in the 16th century.

TRAM STOP: Eminönü

OPEN: Daily

GPS: N41 01.051 E28 58.131


traveltip

If you have the time, pop into Nuruosmaniye Mosque at Nuruosmaniye Gate on the eastern side of the Grand Bazaar. Its plain grey interior with subtle gold embellishments makes a pleasant contrast to the vibrant colours of the market. Look for the finely carved wooden calligraphic frieze around the walls above the gallery.

33 Grand Bazaar (Kapalı Çarşı)

Perhaps the most famous market in the world, Istanbul's Grand Bazaar is not to be missed. In fact you'll probably want to visit this hive of commerce several times to be sure that you've hunted out the best bargains! Home to 4,400 shops, more than 2,000 workshops, 18 fountains, and 12 small mosques, this covered market is a treasure trove of gems waiting to be discovered. Although a map comes in handy, one of the best and most fun ways to explore the 30.7 hectare Grand Bazaar is by trial and error. From slippers to carpets, ceramics to gold, jewellery to hats and scarves to antiques, you're sure to find that special something to take home. Fortunately, there are street names and informational signs throughout the Bazaar so you'll never be lost for long.

TRAM STOP: Çemberlitas or Beyazıt

OPEN: Daily 8.30-19.00. Closed Sunday

GPS: N41 00.621 E28 58.212

traveltip

On way to or from Book Bazaar the Beyazıt Mosque is worth a visit. Completed in 1506, it is the oldest surviving imperial mosque in the city and has a peaceful courtyard centred on a domed fountain. Inside, look up at the mosque's central dome, the edge of which is decorated with a row of miniature domes



34 Book Bazaar (Sahaflar Çarşısı)

Book worms of all nationalities will love the Book Bazaar located round the corner from the Beyazıt Gate of the Grand Bazaar. Housed in a quiet, shady courtyard that was once the Byzantine book and paper market, you'll find the book you're looking for – and one that you didn't know you wanted! In the centre of the courtyard, there's a bust of İbrahim Müteferrika, who on 31 January 1729 produced the first printed book in the Turkish language. If you want a unique memento of Istanbul, some of the stalls have a selection of prints – hidden in the pile, you may find an old image of Istanbul or Turkey to take back home.

TRAM STOP: Beyazıt

OPEN: Daily 8.00–20.00

GPS: N41 00.603 E28 57.988


traveltip

The bus interchange next to Beyazıt Square is a hive of activity 24/7. Take care crossing the street in this area as the buses come from every direction!

35 Beyazıt Square (Beyazıt Meydanı)

Bordered on the north side by the magnificent Moorish-style gates of the Istanbul University, Beyazıt Square is always bustling with people and pigeons. Towards the end of the day, the square becomes home to a large flea market where just about everything is sold from clothes to electronics to carpets. To the right of the gates within the wooded grounds of the university, the Beyazıt tower looms over the square. Built in 1828, this marble fire-watching station replaced two wooden towers, themselves destroyed by fire!

TRAM STOP: Beyazıt

GPS: N41 00.629 E28 57.862

traveltip

If you're looking for an unusual gift to take home from Istanbul, close to the entrance of the Tulip mosque's graveyard, you'll find a small shop where olive based products are sold, including award winning extra virgin olive oils, bath oils, soaps and of course preserved green and black olives.



36 Tulip Mosque (Lâleli Camii)

Sitting on top of an arcade of shops, the Tulip Mosque strikes a dramatic pose above street level with its grey and red striped stone work. Inside this mid-18th century Baroque style mosque, designed by architect Mehmet Tahir Ağa, visitors may be overwhelmed by the use of variegated marble in reds, blues, yellows and browns to create an intricate design on the domed surfaces inside the mosque and in the courtyard outside. The marketplace beneath the mosque is bursting with stalls selling cheap imports from Eastern Europe and Asia. They are housed in a vast space supported by eight pillars that was once a great hall centred on a fountain.

TRAM STOP: Lâleli

OPEN: Prayer times

GPS: N41 00.570 E28 57.456


traveltip

As it is a popular place for tourists, there are a number of restaurants and cafés along the edge of the Süleymaniye complex. Choose a lunch stop a little further away from the mosque for a cheaper alternative.

37 Süleymaniye Mosque Complex

The Süleymaniye Mosque Complex is thought by many to be the most magnificent piece of work by the imperial architect Sinan. And, it's not difficult to see why! Comprising the mosque, a school of theology, a hospital (darüşşifa) and medical school, a primary school, pantry and soup kitchens (imaret), accommodation for travellers (kervansaray), a bath house and the tomb of Süleyman, it took almost nine years to complete and was opened by Sinan at the behest of the sultan. The complex provided support for the city's poor regardless of their religion. From the peaceful garden and courtyard, enter the mosque and gaze up at the magnificent dome, which since 1557 has covered the tranquil prayer space.

TRAM STOP: Beyazit or Eminönü, then a 15 minute walk

OPEN: Daily. Closed during prayer times

GPS: N41 00.912 E28 57.827



Golden Horn

Once a bustling port where traders off-loaded their wares, today the Golden Horn estuary is a place for meeting friends for a waterfront snack, hopping on a boat for a river cruise, strolling along the promenade to admire the view, or visiting some of the most fascinating museums in Istanbul. The districts of Fener, Balat and Eyüp lining the western bank of the Golden Horn are testament to the cultural diversity of the city and lend themselves to walking tours. On the eastern side, the industrial foundations of Istanbul may be uncovered in the truly absorbing Rahmi Koç Museum in the Söğütözü district. Pierre Loti, the French novelist, drew his inspiration from Istanbul's Golden Horn...visitors to this area will understand why.

travel tip

Had a long, fun filled day at Vialand and don't want it to end? Then head to the Galata Bridge at the mouth of the Golden Horn to watch the world go by! It's a particularly magical place as the sun goes down. It is also a nice spot to grab something to eat at one of the cafés under its arches, or try Hamdi restaurant (tel: 0212 528 0390; www.hamdi.com.tr) on Tahmis Caddesi at the back of nearby Eminönü Square—you'll have a grandstand view of the river from there!



38 Vialand

Looking for a change of pace and the biggest adrenalin rush of your life? Then hurry on over to Vialand, Istanbul's world class entertainment centre which combines a theme park, shopping mall and a show centre. With more than 30 rides, thrill seekers of all ages will have the time of their life. Don't miss the Nefeskesen, an adrenaline-pumping rollercoaster that reaches speeds of 110 km per hour in three seconds! After satisfying your family's need for action, Vialand's mall offers a shopper's paradise with international brand names galore along European styled avenues. Once you've drained your energy resources, why not relax in the Palace Hotel, Vialand's very own hotel?

BUS STOP: Taksim or Eminönü to Gaziosmanpaşa

OPEN: Theme Park—Mon-Thurs 10.00-19.00; Fri-Sun 10.00-21.00.

Shopping Mall 10.00-22.00 daily

GPS: N41 04.532 E28 55.163

For more information:  0212 618 9797 / 0 850 210 8563  www.vialand.com


traveltip

There are numerous taxis plying for trade in Istanbul. Be sure to check that the taxi meter is running before you set off. It's also useful to have your destination written out in English and Turkish to avoid costly mistakes.

39 Rezan Has Museum

Housed in the former Cibali Tobacco and Cigarette factory in the grounds of the Kadir Has University, the Rezan Has Museum is not only a treasure trove of archaeological artefacts from the Neolithic Period to Seljuk Empire, but also a building steeped in history. The remains of an 11th century Byzantine cistern and an Ottoman structure were uncovered during the building's restoration and in more recent times the tobacco factory was used as a supply warehouse during World War II. In its latest incarnation as a museum, the entrance floor is used for temporary art exhibitions. Look for the small Urartian jewellery collection (from the Urartu Empire of the 9th - 7th century B.C.) with examples of early metal working techniques dating from the Bronze Age.

BUS STOP: From Eminönü to Cibali

OPEN: Daily 9.00-18.00. Closed first day of religious holidays

GPS: N41 01.533 E28 57.536

For more information: 📞 0212 533 6532 🌐 www.rhm.org.tr

travel tip

If time permits, take a stroll in Fener along Vodina Caddesi Street. There you'll find the green tiled tomb of Hazreti Hüseyin Sadik, next door to the quaint Tahtah Minare Mosque built in 1458. One door down from there is one of Istanbul's oldest Turkish baths, Tahtah Minare. For something entirely contemporary, head to the Cumhane art gallery (tel: 0212 521 6000; www.cumhane.com) next to the Bulgarian church in neighbouring Balat. Here, you're sure to be delighted by the dramatic glass work of artist Yasmin Aslan Bakiri.



40 Greek Orthodox Patriarchate

Cross the main road from the banks of the Golden Horn at Fener bus stop and head up Dr Said Ahmet Street. On the right you'll find the walled complex of the seat of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate—the spiritual leader of the world's Eastern Orthodox Christians, and pastoral head to the dwindling Greek Orthodox faithful in Istanbul. Inside the complex, visitors will find the exterior of the Church of St George quite plain and unassuming, with two ornate decorative plaques in the church's vestibule only hinting at the opulence within. The interior of the church is replete with magnificent gilded figuration and iconography paying homage to the Virgin Mary and the saints. The church dates back to the early 18th century, though some of the relics are much older.

BUS STOP: From Eminönü to Fener

OPEN: Daily 8.30-16.30

GPS: N41 01.766 E28 57.099

For more information: ☎ 0212 525 5416


traveltip

After your visit to the Greek School, take time to stroll through the districts of Balat and Fener where people of the Jewish and Greek Orthodox faiths have lived side by side since the Ottoman period. Though run down in places, you'll feel as if you've stepped back in time to experience 19th century Istanbul. Look for the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate in Fener and the Ahrida Synagogue in Balat.

41 Fener Greek School

A boys-only school for most of its more than 500 year history, the Fener Greek School, perched high on the hill overlooking the Golden Horn, makes a dramatic statement. Although the school was established in 1454 to provide education for the Greek community, the current red bricked building is only 130 years old. Today, happily accepting girls for the past 20 years, the school has its first woman director, who will be delighted to welcome you to this historic school.

BUS STOP: From Eminönü to Fener

OPEN: School hours during term time, check before you visit

GPS: N41 01.769 E28 56.942

For more information: 📞 0212 521 2252

traveltip

The Eyüp district is famous for toy making—parents traditionally took their children to Eyüp Sultan's tomb prior to circumcision and toys were given to entertain them. Today, toy making is being revived and there is a studio at Cafer Paşa Cultural Centre where housewives are trained in toy making. You will also find toy stalls dotted around the neighbourhood.



42 Eyüp District for Tombs

As the burial place of Eyüp Sultan (Halid bin Zeyd), the standard bearer of the Prophet Mohammed, the Eyüp district has been a place of pilgrimage for Muslims for centuries. Over the years, important people have chosen to have their tombs in this area in the hope of intercession with Eyüp Sultan after death. Today, the area has been protected from much of the overzealous developments on the banks of the Golden Horn and Eyüp is a relatively peaceful place where people may stroll and admire the intricate carving and calligraphic work on the tombs. The grandest mausoleums line the streets around the Eyüp Sultan mosque with the graves of less well-off further up the hill.

BUS STOP: from Eminönü Square to Eyüp

GPS: N41 02.845 E28 56.025


travel tip

The shop behind Pierre Loti Café has a selection of books written by Pierre Loti. Read about Istanbul of a bygone age in his book *Constantinople: The way it was and the green mosque at Bursa*, available in several languages. Ask the shop assistant to endorse your book purchase with the café's stamp.

43 Pierre Loti Hill

There are two ways to reach the summit of Pierre Loti Hill to enjoy the breathtaking view of the Golden Horn; one on foot up a steep cobblestone path through the cemetery of Eyüp Sultan, the other by cable car from the foot of the hill. Either way, once you've reached the top you'll see why the famous French author Pierre Loti came here for inspiration. There's a café named after the author where he's reputed to have sat pondering the view below while sipping tea, or was it coffee? Who knows! Whatever your preferred drink, we guarantee the view will make it taste better!

BUS STOP: from Eminönü or Taksim Square to Eyüp

OPEN: Pierre Loti Café—Daily 8.00-24.00

GPS: N41 03.225 E28 56.013

travel tip

After your visit, have a bite to eat at an inexpensive local restaurant such as Çınar Altı (tel: 0212 210 3514), a five-minute walk across the street from Miniaturk in the direction of the city centre. The bus ride back to Eminönü is at least 30 minutes so you might be glad you ate before you left!



44 Miniaturk

Want to see more of Istanbul and Turkey but haven't got time in your schedule? Then a visit to Miniaturk in the district of Sütlüce may be the solution. Children will love exploring this 60,000 sq. m. open-air site which features 120 models of famous attractions in Istanbul, Anatolia and former Ottoman territories outside Turkey—each set to 1/25th scale. Hold on to your entrance ticket as it activates the audio explanation at each model. Don't miss the exhibition of 16 historic monuments of Istanbul, re-created in crystal by laser technology. There's also a small museum commemorating the formation of the Republic of Turkey. Tired little legs will love the miniature train which runs around Miniaturk!

BUS STOP: From Topkapı, Taksim or Eminönü to Sütlüce

OPEN: Daily 9.00-18.00

GPS: N41 03.534 E28 56.945

For more information: 📞 0212 222 28 82

🌐 www.Miniaturk.com.tr


traveltip

If you're at the Rahmi M. Koç Museum at the weekend, check out the special weekend activities. You can choose from a cruise on a restored 1936 steam tug or a ride on a narrow gauge railway along the shores of the Golden Horn! Or if your appetite for classic cars has been awakened, visit the Ataman Classic Car Museum in Tarabya (tel: 0212 299 4539; atamanMuseum.com) where over 50 cars are on display.

45 Rahmi M. Koç Museum

The Rahmi M. Koç Museum is dedicated to the history of transport, industry and communications, and is a treasure trove of exhibits that will delight young and old. Housed in impressive restored buildings—themselves prime examples of industrial archaeology—the collection contains thousands of items, from gramophones and telephones to full size boats and aircraft, not to mention vintage cars and motorbikes, industrial machines and household items and much, much more. You'll want to spend hours wandering around this fascinating museum, learning about Turkey's industrial past. Don't miss the submarine TGC Uluç Ali Reis moored in front of the Haskoy Shipyard, also part of the museum.

BUS STOP: From Taksim or Eminönü to Halıcıoğlu, south of Sütlüce

OPEN: Tues-Fri 10.00-17.00; Sat, Sun & holidays 10.00-18.00 (winter) 20.00 (summer)

GPS: N41 02.551 E28 56.959

For more information: 📞 0212 369 66 00/01/02 🌐 www.rmkmuseum.org.tr

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www.thegalicollection.com



Beyoğlu and beyond

One of the most vibrant districts of Istanbul, Beyoğlu is a buzzing, cultural melting pot—a place to see and be seen. Sprawling up the steep hillside north of the Golden Horn, this area has always been a hive of activity with many ethnic communities settling there since Byzantine times. Formerly comprising the districts of Galata and Pera, this area was home to European ambassadors during the Ottoman period. Today, visitors and locals flock to the recently gentrified İstiklal Caddesi and surrounding neighbourhoods to work, shop and play. Along the banks of the Bosphorus neighbouring the Beyoğlu district and further out to the villages of Ortaköy, Bebek, Rumeli and Emirgan, visitors can escape from the city to chill and enjoy the scenery or explore the history and culture of Istanbul some more.

traveltip

If you're looking for something to drink, why not try freshly squeezed orange juice sold from small barrows close to Karaköy Fish Market? Refreshing at any time of the day!



46 Karaköy Fish Market

One of the good things about Istanbul is that you never have far to go to find food! Just across the Galata Bridge on the left hand side going from Eminönü to Karaköy, is the vibrant and pungent Karaköy fish market. Select your fish of the day from the day's catch, laid out on covered market stalls. But watch your step as the ground can be wet and slippery!

TRAM STOP: Karaköy

OPEN: Dawn to dusk

GPS: N41 01.318 E28 58.429


traveltip

Don't miss the Kamondo Steps, a striking piece of urban design running up from Voyvoda Caddesi in Karaköy district. Donated by Abraham Kamodo, a Sephardic Jewish banker in the 19th century and immortalized by famed French photographer Henri Cartier-Bresson in 1965, as one of Istanbul's finest example of urban street furniture, they are a 'must-see' for all students of architecture and design. Head uphill from Karaköy Tram Stop with the main road on your right and you'll find the steps just round the corner on the left after a short row of shops.

47 Arab Mosque (Arap Camii)

A short walk from Karaköy fish market, just off Nafe Street, is the fascinating Arab Mosque. The 14th century gothic building, formerly a church for Dominican monks, makes for an unusual mosque and is the only remaining example of gothic architecture in Istanbul. The tall square belfry has been converted into a minaret and the rectangular church nave is used as the main prayer hall. The courtyard outside with ablution fountain makes for a pleasant shaded spot to watch the faithful responding to the call for prayer.

TRAM STOP: Karaköy

(NOSTALGIC) FUNICULAR: Karaköy

OPEN: Daily, at prayer times

GPS: N41 01.445 E28 58.268

traveltip

The easiest way to get from Karaköy to İstiklal Caddesi (the main shopping street in Beyoğlu) is by the Tünel, the second oldest underground system in the world after the London Underground. Inaugurated in 1875, it provides a nostalgic trip back in time to the world of the Ottomans and a convenient journey up a very steep hill!



48 Jewish Museum

Housed in the beautifully restored Zulfaris Synagogue that dates from the early 19th century, the Jewish museum provides a clear insight into the life and cultural heritage of Jews in Turkey—a history that can be traced back 700 years. It contains a fascinating collection of old documents, photographs and religious items that demonstrate the Jewish peoples' contribution to social, intellectual and political life in Turkey. If you're interested in finding out more about Jewish history in Istanbul, some tour operators run guided tours of other Jewish sites around Istanbul. Ask at one of the many travel agents in the Sultanahmet.

TRAM STOP: Karaköy

(NOSTALGIC) FUNICULAR: Karaköy

OPEN: Mon-Thurs 10.00-16.00; Fri & Sun 10.00-14.00; Sat & Holy Days closed

GPS: N41 01.397 E28 58.483

For more information: ☎ 0212 292 6333

🌐 www.muze500.com


traveltip

During peak summer months, there may be a long queue to enter the Galata Tower, so go first thing in the morning to avoid a long wait (open 9am to 7pm daily). Or why not reserve a table at the restaurant on the ninth floor (tel: 0212 293 8180; open 8pm to midnight) for a show of folk music and belly dancing that's on every night?

49 Galata Tower

With a bird's eye view of the Golden Horn, the Galata Tower makes an impressive sight, standing proud above Beyoğlu. When constructed, the tower—at over 60 metres—was the tallest structure in the city. Originally built as the Tower of Christ in the 14th century, it was part of fortifications for the Galata Citadel and during Ottoman times it was used as an observation tower to spot fires. Legend has it that the aviation pioneer Hezarfen Ahmet Çelebi, with the help of wings attached to his arms, “flew” from the top of Galata Tower to Dogancilar Square in Üsküdar. Fact or fiction, what visitors can be sure of is that the view from the top on a clear day is spectacular—and there's an elevator to get you there!

(NOSTALGIC) FUNICULAR: Beyoğlu

OPEN: Tower—Daily 9.00–19.00; Restaurant—Daily 20.00-23.00

GPS: N41 01.537 E28 58.444

For more information: 📞 0212 293 8180

🌐 www.galatatower.net

traveltip

On your way to the Church of St Peter and St Paul, pop your head around the door of the Galata House—the Old British Jail—which is steeped in history and is now a restaurant (tel: 0212 245 1861, galatahouse.com). It's an intimate space for lunch or evening meal.



50 Church of St Peter and St Paul

Hidden behind a small grey and white door off Galata Kulesi Sokak just below the Galata Tower, this delightful church is often overlooked. Built by the Fossati brothers in the mid-18th century for the Black Friars, the Church of St Peter and St Paul reflects the architects' Italian-Swiss origin. The rear wall behind the high altar is built into the remains of the Genoese ramparts of Galata. A row of Corinthian columns and crystal chandeliers directs the visitor's eye towards the High Altar behind which is a painting depicting the meeting of Saints Peter and Paul. This, and the attractive, sky-blue, gold-star studded cupola over the choir surrounded by portraits of four Dominican Popes, is a beautiful reminder of the diversity of religious faith in Istanbul.

(NOSTALGIC) FUNICULAR: Beyoğlu

OPEN: Daily for Mass 7.00, Sun & Feast Days 15.30–17.30

GPS: N41 01.483 E28 58.392

For more information: 📞 0212 249 2385



traveltip

Taksim Square is the central station of the Istanbul Metro Network and is a great place to catch a bus to the outer districts of Istanbul. If you don't mind a wait, you can also hop on a yellow minibus at the northern end of the square which, as a shared ride, is much cheaper than a taxi.

51 **İstiklal Caddesi & Taksim Square**

Whether you love to window shop or just want to soak up the atmosphere of a busy Istanbul community, then İstiklal Caddesi is a must-see experience. On a pedestrian-only street that's crowded whatever the day of the week or time of day or night, there's something to suit every taste here, be it modern or traditional. Walk down from Taksim Square, the heart of modern Istanbul and home to the Independence Monument commemorating the Turkish Republic's founder Kemal Atatürk, or ride up from Tünel on the nostalgic streetcar—either way the throng of people will carry you along! There are numerous places to eat on İstiklal Street, from fast food Turkish style to something more refined, such as the restaurants in the restored flower market Çiçek Pasajı.

(NOSTALGIC) FUNICULAR: Beyoğlu **METRO STOP:** Taksim



traveltip

Photographers won't want to miss visiting Kafe Ara (tel: 0212 245 4105) set back off Yeni Çarşı Caddesi, halfway between Tünel and Taksim. Here you'll find some of the works of famed Turkish photographer Ara Guler decorating the walls of the café (araguler.com.tr/). You may even meet the elderly photographer who has a studio above the café and can often be found chatting with friends over coffee.



traveltip

Musicians of all persuasions will be delighted to find Galipdede Caddesi (named after one of the great poets of the Sufi sect). From electric guitars to violins and trumpets to drums, you'll find every imaginable musical instrument and all associated musical paraphernalia in this street that stretches from Galata Tower to the end of İstiklal Street. It'll bring out the musical pulse in everyone!



52 **Mevlevi Lodge**

Stepping into the grounds of the Mevlevi Lodge (Galata Mevlevihanesi Müzesi) and museum, it's hard to believe that there can be such a haven of tranquillity in the heart of the bustling Galata district. And yet, peace descends the minute you enter this fascinating “window on the world” of the Mevlevi Sufi sect. This informative and well laid out museum has rooms devoted to the religious practices of the Sufi sect, their music, the whirling dervishes dress code and their daily life. In the surrounding courtyard and adjacent graveyard, visitors can see tombstones shaped like the hats worn by sect members.

(NOSTALGIC) FUNICULAR: Beyoğlu

METRO STOP: Taksim

OPEN: 9.00-18.00 (June-Sept); 9.00-16.00 (Oct to May). Closed Monday

GPS: N41 01.677 E28 58.513

For more information: ☎ 0212 245 4141


traveltip

If you're on a tight budget, you can see a whirling dervish performance given by one *semazen* at the Dervish Café (tel: 0212 516 1515), adjacent to the Baths of Roxelana in Sultanahmet. Only open in summer, this pleasant, shaded café is also a great place for people watching and soaking up the atmosphere on a hot summer's night.

53 Whirling Dervish dance of Sufi sect

The hypnotic effect of the enigmatic 'dance', or *sema*, of the whirling dervish is an experience not to be missed. You will be transported into a mystical world as the voluminous circular skirts of the *semazen*, as the dancers are known, slowly unfurl to the haunting sound of ancient instruments. Their aim is to revolve in harmony with nature rather than reach a meditative state, as is commonly assumed. Watch how the feet of the *semazen* remain on the spot as he whirls and whirls and whirls with his right hand facing toward the sky, ready to receive God's kindness, and his left hand, on which his eyes are fixed, turned towards the earth. Performances are held at various locations including the Mevlevi Lodge and the Hodjapasha Culture Centre.

For more information: 📍 Mevlevi Lodge: 0212 245 4141

📍 Hodjapasha Culture Centre: 0212 511 46 26

54 **St Anthony of Padua Catholic Cathedral**

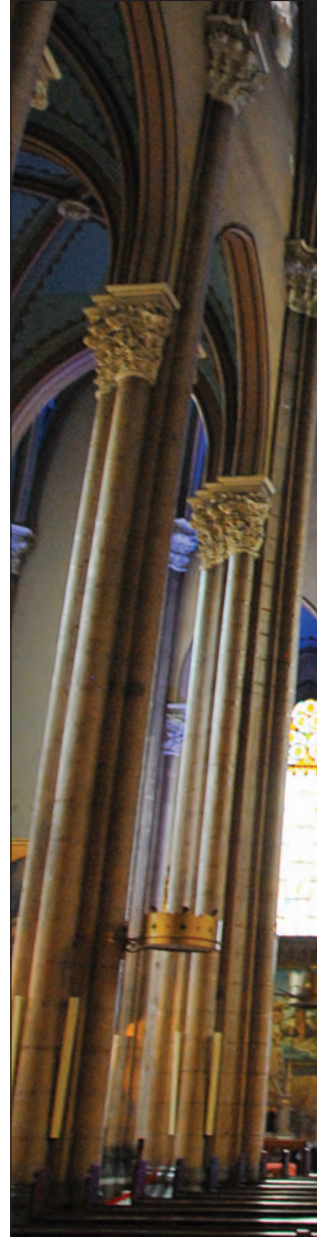
Juxtaposed against the modern multi-coloured shop fronts either side, the St Anthony of Padua Catholic Cathedral makes a striking sight midway along Istanbul's busiest pedestrian street, set back off the main thoroughfare. This red-brick Venetian neo-gothic building dates from 1912 (although the original building was erected in 1725) and is the largest Roman Catholic Church in Istanbul. On a clear day, look up at the sky reflected in the tiny windows that frame the outline of the building. St Anthony's main claim to fame is that Pope John XXIII preached here for 10 years, when he was the Vatican's Ambassador to Turkey, before being elected pope. He is known in Turkey as "The Turkish Pope" because of his fluent Turkish and his often expressed love for Turkey and the city of Istanbul. Mass is held in English, Italian, Turkish and Polish to meet the needs of the church's large congregation.

(NOSTALGIC) FUNICULAR: Beyoğlu

METRO STOP: Taksim

OPEN: Daily for mass and other times for general visitors

GPS: N41 01.955 E28 58.586



traveltip

Whatever the season, it's always time for Turkish ice cream. And there's nothing quite like the spectacle of ice cream served at one of the small kiosks and cake shops dotted along Istiklal Caddesi. Here, the brightly costumed ice cream sellers will fill your cone to the brim in a showy display of trickery. It's all part of the fun so play along with the game but be sure you don't go away with an empty cone!



traveltip

Want to step back in time and luxuriate in a bygone era? Then you should stop for afternoon tea at the Pera Palas Hotel (tel: 0212 251 4560). This hotel was built in 1892 to specifically cater for the passengers of the Orient Express. And indeed, little has changed since guests such as Agatha Christie and Greta Garbo stayed there. The favourite room of Turkey's first President, Atatürk, is now a small museum—open 10am to 11am and 3pm to 4pm daily.



55 Pera Museum (Pera Müzesi)

A short walk from İstiklal Caddesi, the Pera Museum was opened in 2005, transforming a former hotel into a modern and fully equipped museum. The five-floor museum houses three permanent collections; a striking display of orientalist paintings examining the intersecting worlds of ambassadors and painters, a fascinating exhibition of over 10,000 Anatolian weights and measures, and a beautiful presentation of 800 predominantly blue and white Kütahya tiles and ceramics. Add to these temporary contemporary art exhibits held throughout the year and this museum is sure to have something to suit all artistic tastes. With a delightful café and well-stocked gift shop on the ground floor, the Pera Museum is well worth a visit.

(NOSTALGIC) FUNICULAR: Beyoğlu **METRO STOP:** Taksim

OPEN: Tuesday–Saturday 10.00–19.00; Sunday 12.00–18.00; closed Monday

GPS: N41 01.911 E28 58.496

For more information: ☎ 0212 334 9900 🌐 www.peramuzesi.org.tr


traveltip

Had enough of hotel living? Then why not rent an apartment instead? You'll have all the comforts of home and the freedom that living "at home" affords... no breakfast timings to fit in with, for starters! Renting an apartment may work out cheaper than a hotel if you're a family of four or more. For a selection of modern apartments, try Arsu Living Istanbul (tel: 0531 221 7156; living-istanbul.com). All their apartments are located in the heart of Beyoğlu so you won't have far to walk to see the sights either!

56 Listen to the music

If music be the food of love then Istanbul is THE city of romance. Fasıl, a heady mix of folk, gypsy and classical music all rolled into one, can be enjoyed at many bars and cafes in the Taksim area or check local listings for concert schedules elsewhere in the city. And, as many restaurants have live music—your hotel will be able to advise you what's close by—you'll never have far to go to enjoy all that Turkish music has to offer throughout the year, from jazz to folk to classical to hip-hop to sufi and more! If you're in Istanbul during the summer, look for a performance at the International Istanbul Music Festival, usually in June/July, or the International Istanbul Jazz Festival in July (visit www.istfest.org for all Istanbul festival listings).

traveltip

The market may be a little difficult to find the first time but ask for the Ekolojik Pazar at the metro station and you'll be heading in the right direction before you know it. And make sure you get there early to snap up the freshest organic produce as the market will be bustling by 8.15am!



57 **Şişli Feriköy Organic Market**

Billed as Istanbul's first organic market, the market at Şişli Feriköy is a precious find; all products sold there are certified organic.

Established in 2006, this market welcomes producers and consumers alike who not only come to buy the delicious produce but also to meet, socialise, exchange news and garner support for environmental activities. Be prepared to spend a little more than at conventional bazaars and supermarkets but rest assured that you will be buying fresh produce and non-perishable items of the highest quality that is neither damaging to the environment nor your health. Look for the women making gözleme (a cheese filled flaky pancake)—a delicious accompaniment to a glass of Turkish tea!

METRO STOP: Osmanbey

OPEN: Saturday 8.00–17.00

GPS: N41 03.410 E028 58.896


traveltip

If you plan to visit a number of museums during your stay, the cost of tickets can begin to add up. The Müze Pass (http://muze.gov.tr/museum_pass) might be the solution for you! It costs 72TL, is valid for 72 hours beginning with your first museum visit, and allows you to visit top attractions, such as Hagia Sophia Museum, Chora Museum and Topkapı Palace Museum, without having to queue.

58 Military Museum (Askeri Müze)

The munitions and aircraft in the grounds of the Military Museum hint at what's in store for visitors. And you won't be disappointed for this impressive museum is packed with military artefacts and memorabilia from conflicts stretching back as far as the conquest of Constantinople in 1453. Don't miss the daily performance of the Ottoman Mehter Band, first formed in the 14th century. The striking red uniforms of the instrumentalists and stirring patriotic songs they perform are sure to be a lasting memory of Istanbul.


METRO STOP: Osmanbey

OPEN: 9.00-17.00. Closed Monday & Tuesday

GPS: N41 02.958 E28 59.295

For more information:

 0212 233 2720

 www.tsk.tr/2_genel_bilgiler/2_6_askeri_muze/askeri_muze.htm

traveltip

It's not necessary to read Orhan Pamuk's novel to fully comprehend his Museum of Innocence or to have visited the museum in order to understand the novel. However, you'll certainly gain a deeper appreciation of what you've seen/ will see if you've read the novel, for sale at the museum's shop in several languages.



59 Museum of Innocence

Opened to the public in April 2012, this delightful place is both a novel by Orhan Pamuk (published in 2008) and a museum he founded. The two are seamlessly entwined; the novel is about love, described through the memories of members of two families—one wealthy, the other lower middle class—while the museum presents what the novel's characters used, wore, heard, saw, collected and dreamed of, all meticulously arranged in glass boxes. And, it is these displays which make the Museum of Innocence so enchanting, drawing the viewer into the mind's eye of the characters while depicting life as it was in Istanbul between 1950 and 2000. You will relish the refreshing way this museum, the first of its kind in the world, tells its beautiful story.

(NOSTALGIC) FUNICULAR: Beyoğlu **METRO STOP:** Taksim

OPEN: Tuesday-Thursday, Saturday-Sunday 10.00-18.00, Friday 10.00-21.00

GPS: N41 01.861 E28 58.771

For more information: ☎ 0212 252 9738 🌐 www.masumiyetmuzesi.org


traveltip

While some antique shops are entirely fixed price, other shop owners will be willing to negotiate. So remember to bargain, bargain and bargain some more. But be polite and realistic, both sides need to feel they got the best deal they could!

60 Çukurcuma's Antiques

If antiques are your thing, why not wander around the Çukurcuma area of Beyoğlu, just south of İstiklal Caddesi? Here you'll find a treasure trove of pieces, large and small, in shops dotted along a patchwork of narrow streets and alleyways. As well as chests, doors, furniture, decorative items, clothing and garden statues, you'll find some really quirky bits and pieces that are sure to become your favourite mementos of your visit to Istanbul and great talking points around the dinner table.

(NOSTALGIC) FUNICULAR: Beyoğlu

METRO STOP: Taksim

GPS: N41 01.928 E28 58.846

traveltip

Across the main road from Tophane-i Amire Culture and Art Centre visitors may continue their cultural tour of Istanbul either at the Istanbul Museum of Modern Art—a five-minute walk away—or by enjoying a Turkish coffee and shisha at one of the many cafés close to the waterfront.



61 Tophane-i Amire Culture & Art Centre

The unremarkable façade of the Tophane-i Amire Culture and Art Centre, run by Mimar Sinan Sanatlar Üniversitesi, belies both the fascinating history of the building and the exceptional art exhibitions held within. Built in the 15th century by Sultan Mehmed II as a cannonball foundry, in the mid-19th century it became a centre of industry and commerce for weaponry. Today, the domed building has been transformed into a unique exhibition space featuring top class national and international exhibitions.

TRAM STOP: Tophane

OPEN: Daily 10.00-19.00

GPS: N41 01.661 E28 58.844

For more information:

 0212 252 5953

 www.msgsu.edu.tr/msu/pages/tophane-i_amire_k_s_m.aspx


traveltip

Open every day from 10am to midnight, the terrace of the restaurant (tel: 0212 292 2612) at the Istanbul Museum of Modern Art provides a stunning waterfront view of the Bosphorus and old city. It's a great place for a snack or more leisurely meal. Reserve your table to get the best view!

62 Istanbul Museum of Modern Art

Set on the banks of the Bosphorus, the sharp, angular lines of the Istanbul Museum of Modern Art's building contrast dramatically with the curves of the Nusretiye Mosque adjacent to it and the towering white cruise liners that are often seen docked alongside it. Visitors will not be disappointed by the extensive display of works from the museum's collection of contemporary art together with exhibits of photography, design, architecture, new media and cinema. There's a well-stocked reference library on the basement level that is sure to be a hit with art students and those curious to know more. It's reached via a staircase suspended from the ceiling by chains and the library's entrance is decorated with books 'floating' from wires overhead.

TRAM STOP: Tophane

OPEN: Tues–Sun 10.00–18.00, Thurs 10.00–20.00. Restaurant: Daily 10.00–24.00

GPS: N41 01.653 E28 59.024

For more information: 📞 0212 334 7300 🌐 www.istanbulmodern.org

63 Dolmabahçe Palace

Don't let the line of tourists outside Dolmabahçe Palace deter you from your visit; your patience will be rewarded not only with a stroll through a beautiful formal garden beside the Bosphorus but also the chance to see the awe inspiring, opulent interior of this magnificent palace. Built in 1856 by Sultan Abdul Mecit at the tail end of the Ottoman era, this palace is filled with every luxury imaginable. Designed to be symmetrical in all respects, including the placing of furniture, the palace's stunning crystal staircase and magnificent grand ceremonial hall, complete with 4.5 ton chandelier, are just two of the palace's features that will take your breath away. Don't forget to take a close look at the outside of the palace, its intricate stone facade is magnificently lavish!

TRAM STOP: Kabataş

OPEN: Daily 9.00-16.00 except Monday and Thursday. May close earlier if ticket quota exceeded.

GPS: N41 02.224 E28 59.686

For more information:

 0212 236 9000

 www.millisaraylar.gov.tr



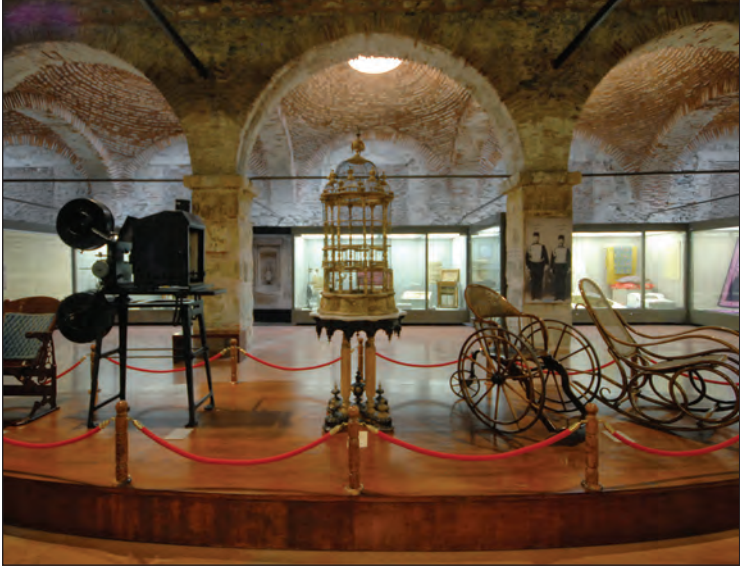
traveltip

If you're in Istanbul during the summer months make sure you visit the Dolmabahçe Palace on a Tuesday at 11am to listen to the military band perform in front of the massive arched imperial gateway to the palace, once only used by the sultan and his ministers. The striking red and gold uniform of band members tops off this must-see Istanbul spectacle!



travel tip

Before heading back to the city from the Beşiktaş area, stop at the Kempinski Hotel (tel: 0212 326 4646), formerly Çırağan Palace, or the Four Seasons Hotel (tel: 0212 381 4000) for pre-dinner drinks at one of the hotels' waterfront restaurants. As the sun sets over the Bosphorus, watch ocean liners, pleasure boats, and tankers come and go on one of the busiest stretches of water in the world.



64 Palace Collections Museum

Only a few steps away from the Dolmabahçe Palace, on the way to Beşiktaş, the Palace Collections Museum gives visitors a unique insight into life inside the palace during Ottoman times. Through a host of interesting artefacts, you can learn about how children at the palace were educated, imagine what it must have been like at extravagant banquets and read about the manufacture of the famous Moser Crystal, Yıldız ceramics and Hereke carpets. Particularly striking is a collection of gilded candelabra, delicate porcelain and crystal and silver tableware.

TRAM STOP: Kabataş

OPEN: Daily 9.00–17.00. Closed Monday

GPS: N41 02.502 E29 00.236

For more information: 📞 0212 236 9000 🌐 www.millisaraylar.gov.tr


traveltip

Take a look at the Barbaros Statue in the square adjacent to the Naval Museum. It was sculptured by Zühtü Müridoğlu and Hadi Bey in 1944 out of marble and bronze and its pedestal is shaped like a ship. Catch the ferry to Üsküdar from here, you'll find it much quicker than the bus or taxi.

65 Istanbul Naval Museum

Enthusiasts of all things nautical are sure to be fascinated by the Naval Museum at Beşiktaş. Founded in 1897 in a small building in the Imperial Dockyard, the Naval Museum was moved to its current location in 1961. Here, you will find over 20,000 objects on three floors, including ship models, paintings, coats of arms, naval uniforms, figureheads, maps, coins and weapons. Don't miss the display of tuğra on the second floor. These calligraphic monograms or seals of the sultan were used on official documents and displayed on ships during the Ottoman period.

TRAM STOP: Kabataş

BUS/FERRY STOP: Beşiktaş

OPEN: Wed, Thurs, Fri 9.00–17.00; Sat & Sun 10.00–18.00; closed Mon & Tues & first day of religious holidays

GPS: N41 02.485 E29 00.353

For more information: ☎ 0212 327 4345/46 🌐 www.denizmuzeleri.tsk.tr

traveltip

It's a steep climb up to the Malta and Çadır Pavilions and picnic area so you might want to get your taxi to drive you there if you're carrying lots of picnic gear and have young children in tow.



66 Yıldız Park

If you take the bus along the busy road running past the Dolmabahçe Palace towards Çırağan Palace you'd be forgiven for thinking that this is just a built up area with nothing much to see aside from a few palaces! But look a little closer and you may be able to spot the delightful Yıldız Park, set back from the road up a steep hill. It's an oasis of greenery and a favourite place for newly-weds to pose for pictures in the late afternoon sunshine. Here, your family can admire newly planted flowers, ancient trees and exotic shrubs, run and play ball, enjoy a picnic or simply chill while reading the newspaper or watching the ducks. It's a great spot for Sunday brunch too at one of the two late 19th century pavilions in the park, known as Malta and Çadır.

TRAM STOP: Kabataş followed by bus to Yıldız

PARKS AND PAVILIONS OPEN: Daily 9.00-21.00

GPS: N41 02.741 E29 00.983


traveltip

Don't overlook the "modern" technology which has been added to the Chalet Mansion over the years, including ornate ceramic stoves to heat the property, a tiled bathroom instead of water closets and electric lighting to replace candles.

67 Yıldız Palace Chalet Mansion

The Yıldız Palace is a collection of 23 pavilions and villas built and added on to during the Ottoman period. The most celebrated of these is the Şale Köşkü, or Chalet Mansion—so named for its similarity to a Swiss chalet. The mansion, situated in a beautiful walled garden, consists of three adjoining sections built at different times but seamlessly connected. The chalet's primary role was to accommodate state guests. Here, sultans welcomed dignitaries such as King Hussein of Jordan and President Charles de Gaulle of France and a glimpse at the Chalet's Ceremonial Hall, boasting a 406 square metre Hereke carpet and gilded coffered ceiling, demonstrates why it was used for state occasions.

TRAM STOP: Kabataş followed by bus to Yıldız

OPEN: Daily 9.30-16.30. Closed Monday, Thursday & first day of religious holidays

GPS: N41 03.082 E29 00.815

For more information: 📞 0212 236 9090 🌐 www.millisaraylar.gov.tr

traveltip

Buses, trams, ferries and the metro are cheap, safe, clean and easy to use, particularly if you buy a smart card— Istanbulkart (Istanbul card)—which can be used on all forms of public transport and topped up at newspaper kiosks. Though regular and reliable, try to avoid travelling during peak periods such as lunch time as some buses and trams can be very crowded.



68 Ortaköy Square

Looking for something to do at the weekend? Why not check out one of Istanbul's flea markets? Although most of the products come from the Asian subcontinent and Africa, you'll find just about everything at Ortaköy Flea market, including stalls brimming with jewellery, crafts and clothing. Sprawling over the streets around the waterfront mosque, it's a pleasant spot to spend a few hours. Ortaköy itself is a popular place with locals who head there on weekend evenings to enjoy a drink as the sun sets over the Bosphorus. If you're looking for a cheap but filling snack, try *kumpir* (baked potatoes piled high with your choice of topping) from one of the stalls in the food section of the market. And, if you're still not satisfied, follow it with a gigantic waffle. Simply delicious!

BUS STOP: From Taksim Square or Beşiktaş to Ortaköy

OPEN: Sunday only, 11.00 onwards

GPS: N41 02.896 E29 01.608


travel tip

Set off early and stay late if you plan to visit Emirgan at the weekend as the road to the park can get extremely busy. Where possible, use public transport to avoid parking problems. It is also pleasant (and convenient) to take the ferry from Eminönü to Emirgan. Or, if you are a group of five or six people, a water taxi will be a cheaper option than a conventional taxi.

69 Emirgan Park

During the spring, Istanbul is awash with colour as millions of tulips burst forth from just about every green space available in the parks, gardens, streets and roadsides of Istanbul. One of the best places to view this spectacle is Emirgan Park where the finest flowers are on show in April at the Annual Tulip Festival. This beautiful park with an outstanding view of the Bosphorus has three late 19th century Ottoman period pavilions (Yellow, Pink and White), now converted into cafés, a fountain, grotto and children's play area. With 472,000 sq. m. of woodland and two small lakes, it's a great place to relax and unwind and enjoy a picnic.

BUS STOP: From Taksim Square or Beşiktaş to Emirgan

OPEN: Daily 7.00-22.30

For more information: 📞 0212 277 5782

traveltip

The Sakıp Sabancı Museum holds an extensive range of art education workshops for children and adults throughout the year. Ask about their weekend activities—many are free for children (tel: 0216 550 9762).



70 Sakıp Sabancı Museum

Art enthusiasts will want to spend several hours at this museum as it's packed with works of art to suit all tastes. The museum is housed in the Atlı Köşk (Equestrian Mansion) designed by Edouard De Nari in 1925 for Prince Mehmet al Harasai and set in beautiful gardens with a stunning view of the Bosphorus. It features an interactive display of more than 200 important examples of Ottoman calligraphic manuscripts, prayer books and Holy Qu'rans together with an animated explanation of the imperial ciphers (or tuğra) of Ottoman sultans. Other parts of the house are filled with fine examples of furniture and porcelain from the 19th and 20th centuries.

BUS STOP: From Taksim Square or Beşiktaş to Emirgan-Çınaraltı

OPEN: Daily 10:00-18:00 except Wednesday 10:00-20:00. Closed Monday and first day of religious holidays

GPS: N41 06.345 E29 03.399

For more information: ☎ 0212 277 22 00 🌐 <http://muze.sabanciuniv.ed>


traveltip

For a truly atmospheric experience, check listings to see if there's an open air performance at Rumeli Fortress during your visit.

71 Rumeli Hisari (Fortress Europe)

Perched high on the embankment above Rumeli on the European side of the Bosphorus, Rumeli Fortress makes a dramatic sight at the narrowest point of the river directly opposite Anadolu Hisari (Asian Fortress). Built by Sultan Mehmet in 1452, this fort was ideally positioned to control sea traffic and supplies into Constantinople and formed a key element of Mehmet II's strategy to gain control of the city. With three giant towers and a series of smaller turrets linked by high walls, the troops stationed here were well protected as they rained down cannon fire on passing ships. Climb to the top of the battlements and imagine the stranglehold they had on river traffic and see why it became known as the Boğazkesen—throat cutter—but watch your footing, it's a long way down!

BUS STOP: Kabataş, then bus to Rumeli Pier

OPEN: Daily 9.00-18.00. Closed Wednesday

GPS: N41 05.142 E29 03.413

traveltip

Along the waterfront between Emirgan and Bebek you'll find plenty of cafés and restaurants where you can enjoy a drink or a meal with a spectacular view. Grab your table early at the weekend, otherwise you'll be waiting in line at the most popular places!



72 **Bebek Village**

A popular spot for lunch and a stroll, Bebek (meaning baby) was once a favourite place for nobility who built summer houses and palaces in and around the village. Today, except for the magnificent Egyptian consulate with its bold Art Nouveau style, there is little evidence of this extravagant history. With a host of waterfront cafés and restaurants, Bebek continues to be a favourite of residents of Istanbul who throng here in the summer months. If you don't mind the traffic jam, you'll be spoilt for choice and there's a pleasant shaded park where you can sit and watch the activity in the nearby marina.

BUS STOP: Kabataş, then bus to Rumeli Pier

GPS: N41 04.590 E29 02.594



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An aerial photograph of the Western Districts of Istanbul, Turkey. The image shows the Yedikule Fortress, a large stone structure with multiple towers and a central courtyard, surrounded by modern buildings and greenery. In the background, the Bosphorus Strait is visible, with a long stone pier extending into the water. The sky is clear and blue, and the water is a deep blue. A Turkish flag is visible on a pole in the foreground.

Western Districts

Spreading west from Sultanahmet and the Bazaar Quarter, the Western Districts are dotted with points of historical interest that have stood the test of time despite being encroached on by the modernisation and redevelopment of Istanbul. From the Roman Valens Aqueduct, the old city walls and the ancient Yedikule Fortress to the stunning Church of St Saviour Chora and the historic Zeyrek Quarter close by, visitors who venture further afield will be immersed in Istanbul's history at every turn. For something more contemporary, the recently opened Istanbul Aquarium in Florya district will keep all age groups entertained.

traveltip

With water all around, it's hardly surprising that fish features high on most restaurant menus in Istanbul. If you want to buy and taste fish at its freshest, then head to Kumkapi. Here, you can eat at a fish restaurant in the village or head across the main road to the waterfront fish market to buy fish to cook for yourself!



73 Istanbul Photography Museum

The Istanbul Photography Museum opened its doors in November 2011 and, with an archive of hundreds of photographs to draw from, it has rapidly established itself as a thriving location celebrating the art of Turkish photography. As well as a permanent exhibition, the museum hosts temporary exhibitions in its five galleries. The museum's central corridor shows a timeline of the history of Turkish photography from 1826 to the present day, enabling visitors to see developments in photographic styles and techniques over the 19th and 20th centuries.

SUBURBAN TRAIN STOP: Kumkapi

TRAM STOP: Sultanahmet followed by 20 min walk

OPEN: Daily 10.00-18.00, closed Monday

GPS: N41 00.292 E28 58.067

For more information: 📞 0212 458 8842 🌐 www.istanbulfotografmuzesi.com


travel tip

The Istanbul International Peace Garden (www.ipgf.org), only a few steps from Yedikule Fortress, is a pleasant place for an afternoon stroll. It makes for an interesting photo opportunity against the backdrop of the fortress and city walls.

74 Yedikule Fortress

Want to walk in the footsteps of history? Then Yedikule Fortress is the place to visit. Yedikule—meaning Seven Towers—incorporates both Byzantine and Ottoman features. Never used as a military fortress, during Byzantine times Yedikule comprised the Golden Gate and only four towers. The Golden Gate entrance was used for triumphal processions into Constantinople to mark the accession of a new emperor or to celebrate a victorious military campaign. The remaining three towers were added during the Ottoman period. Though narrow and uneven in parts, and not for anyone afraid of heights, a walk along the ramparts is a must for a magnificent view of the surrounding area and a busy stretch of the Bosphorus.

BUS STOP: Yedikule

SUBURBAN TRAIN STOP: Yedikule

OPEN: Daily 9.30–17.00, closed Wednesday

GPS: N40 59.612 E28 55.426

For more information: 📞 0212 584 4012 🌐 www.yedikulezindanlari.com

traveltip

To get the most out of your visit, be sure to hire an audio guide at the Panorama 1453 museum (the exhibition leading up to the 3D display is in Turkish). The dialog truly brings the battle scene to life!



75 Panorama 1453 Historical Museum

Located a stone's throw from the ramparts of the city wall where the battle took place, the Panorama 1453 Historical Museum tells, in vivid 3D animation, the story of the conquest of Constantinople by Ottoman Sultan Mehmet II, subsequently given the title Fatih (or conqueror) after his victory. The battle marked the end of the Byzantine Empire in the region. The graphic painting depicts the siege of the city and the principal battle that led to its fall in a 38-metre diameter, 2,350 square metre panoramic painting that took eight artists three years to complete using 10,000 live models. Visitors young and old will be struck by the drama of the painting and the sound effects that bring it to life.

TRAM STOP: Topkapı

OPEN: Daily 9.00-19.00

GPS: N41 01.082 E28 55.197

For more information: 📞 0212 415 1453 🌐 www.panoramikmuze.com


travel tip

A taxi ride along the edge of the wall is the easiest way to view the wall in its entirety. But if you want to take a closer look, catch a tram to Aksaray, then walk to the nearby metro station and catch a train to Topkapı-Ulubatlı station. It sounds complicated but it's really easy to navigate and the signs are clear. Alternatively, if you plan to visit Eyüp, it's easy to access the wall by backtracking in the direction of Sultanahmet along the banks of the Golden Horn.

76 Walk city walls

Visitors to Istanbul don't have to go far to see the Byzantine city walls of ancient Constantinople for they stretch in wide arch from Yedikule on the Sea of Marmara to Ayvansaray on the Golden Horn. Some of the remains have fallen into disrepair but it is still possible to see many of the 11 fortified gates and 192 towers that protected the city and sections of the original wall. Although a main road has been built alongside much of the length of the 6.5km wall, you can walk through a number of the original gates to gain access to the city and view the immense structure up close.

travel tip

Istanbul Aquarium is five minutes away from the Atatürk International Airport, so it's quite a ride by taxi or bus and also there is a bus from Eminönü and along the Kennedy Street. Make your aquarium visit a full day excursion by popping in to the Aquaflyra Mall next door. Here you'll find hundreds of international and local branded stores, numerous eateries and a cinema to fill your day! Alternatively, take a taxi to the nearby Aviation Museum (Havacılık Müzesi) at Yeşilköy.



77 Istanbul Akvaryum (Aquarium)

The statistics about İstanbul Aquarium, the world's biggest thematic aquarium, are dazzling—there are 64 tanks with 6,800 cubic metres of water, a 1,000 square metre 'Rain Forest' with 16 different thematic areas displaying 15,000 land and sea creatures across 1,500 species. İstanbul Aquarium promises a unique experience. Take a 1.2 km journey around the world's seas and oceans and you'll be astonished at the beauty and diversity of all that swims and crawls. From Sand Tiger Shark and Caretta Caretta in the Red Sea to Cownose Ray in the Atlantic; and piranha and Caiman in the Rain Forest, you're sure to find a favourite! If you want to see those creatures up close and explore the magnificence of the underwater, you can dive into the biggest tank with 1,500 species inside.

BUS STOP: Eminönü – Kennedy Street (BN1, BN2, BN3)

OPEN: Daily 10.00–19.00; weekends 10.00–20.00

GPS: N40 57.897 E28 47.973

For more information: 📞 0212 574 21 30 🌐 www.istanbulakvaryum.com


travel tip

Before leaving the Aviation Museum, enjoy a snack at the museum's cafeteria which is next to the main building. Or if you have a bit more time to spare and would like to see a contemporary pavilion, head to Florya and the Atatürk Pavilion (millisaraylar.gov.tr). Constructed by the Municipality of Istanbul in 1935 as a summer house for President Atatürk, it has been preserved entirely the way Atatürk used it.

78 Aviation Museum

Visitors of all ages will love the Aviation Museum in Yeşilköy as it's filled with all manner of aircraft including fighter jets, hovercraft, cargo planes and helicopters! Opened to the public in 1986 and affiliated to the office of the Chief of Turkish General Staff, this museum has sections devoted to aviation weaponry, uniforms, medals and other flight memorabilia drawn from the time of Ottoman aviation to the present day. The exhibition also includes a set of visually striking bronze busts of captains who once served in the Turkish Air Force. And the best bit? You can climb up and look inside some of the aircraft—a delight for all budding aviators!

BUS STOP: From Eminönü or Sirkeci to Hava Müzesi

OPEN: Daily 09:00-17:00, closed Monday & Tuesday

GPS: N40 57.797 E028 49.571

For more information: 📞 0212 663 2490 🌐 www.hho.edu.tr/muze/muze.htm

traveltip

Spend some time exploring the streets around the Kariye Museum. You'll find several cafés and a number of shops selling souvenirs. And if you're interested in pottery and ceramics, check out Firca (tel: 0212 534 4916; fircaceramic.com) where a skilled potter will be happy to give you a demonstration.



79 Church of St Saviour Chora (Kariye Müzesi)

From the outside, the Church of St Saviour Chora is an unassuming, multi-domed Byzantine building with a pretty garden and a pleasant view. Yet if you overlook this church, you will miss a treat; hidden behind its red brick and stone walls are some of the very finest Byzantine mosaics and frescos in Istanbul. The name of the church Chora—derived from the Greek word meaning country—suggests that the original 5th century chapel built by East Roman Emperor Justinian was outside the city walls. The present church within the city walls dates from the 11th century and the mosaics and frescos from the latter part of the East Roman Empire (14th century).

METRO STOP: Ulubatli and 20 min walk **BUS STOP:** Fevzi Paşa and 5 min walk

OPEN: Daily except Wed. 9.00 – 16.30 (winter) 9.00 – 18.00 (summer)

GPS: N41 01.928 E28 56.384

For more information: 📞 0212 631 9241


travel tip

If you ever get lost in Istanbul or can't find the place you're looking for, don't worry. Just ask a local—most will try their best to help you find your way and with a smile and some sign language, there won't even be a language barrier!

80 Church of Pammakaristos (Fethiye Camii)

For over 100 years after the Ottoman conquest, this church housed the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate until it was converted into a mosque in the 16th century by Murat III who named it Fethiye Camii (Mosque of Victory) in celebration of his conquests. Though not often on tourists' lists of "must see" places in Istanbul, the church hides another of the city's gems; spectacular Byzantine mosaics depicting holy figures set against a brilliant gold background. There are images of Christ "the All-Powerful" surrounded by Old Testament prophets, and portraits of the Virgin Mary and John the Baptist overlooked by four archangels. Be sure to look for the gold leaf script on a blue background on the south wall of the church, said to be a poem by the Byzantine poet Files.

BUS STOP: from Eminönü to Fener, then 10 minute walk

OPEN: Museum—Daily 9.00-18.00. Closed Wednesdays

Mosque—Prayer times only

traveltip

Don't be surprised if stall holders offer you samples of their delicious produce or welcome you for a cup of tea and even breakfast. And watch out for barrow holders nipping through the crush with their load of *simit* (a pretzel like bread roll) or oranges, ready to squeeze you the freshest juice ever!



81 Wednesday Market at Fatih Mosque (Fatih Camii)

If you're looking for just about ANYTHING, from fresh produce to grocery items or household products to clothes, then the Wednesday market at Fatih Mosque is the place to go! Sprawling into the streets north, east and south of the mosque, this is a bustling local market where you'll find yourself carried along by the throng of people going about their weekly shopping. You're sure to find some amazing bargains!

TRAM STOP: Emniyet

OPEN: Wednesday 8.00 onwards

GPS: N41 01.228 E28 57.016


traveltip

If your taxi can wait, take a peek at the three tombs behind the Prince's Mosque (Şehzade Camii) close to Valens Aqueduct. If you're lucky, they'll be open and you can see the beautiful İznik tiles and stained glass that adorn these tombs.

82 Valens Aqueduct (Bozdoğan Kemer)

Visitors taking a taxi along Atatürk Bulvarı cannot fail to notice the Valens Aqueduct looming large ahead of them. Built in the 4th century, this structure brought water from the Belgrade Forest and mountains over 200km away to cisterns in the city. It helped provide water during the late Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman Empires, a span of some 1,500 years. Originally 1,000 metres long, you should stand close to it to get a sense of the scale of this double arched structure, an amazing feat of Roman engineering.

TRAM STOP: Aksaray, then 10 minute walk

GPS: N41 00.940 E28 57.350

traveltip

Wherever you are in Istanbul, be sure to take lots of pictures of the old wooden houses as sadly they may not be there the next time you visit, given the pace of redevelopment and renovation in the city.



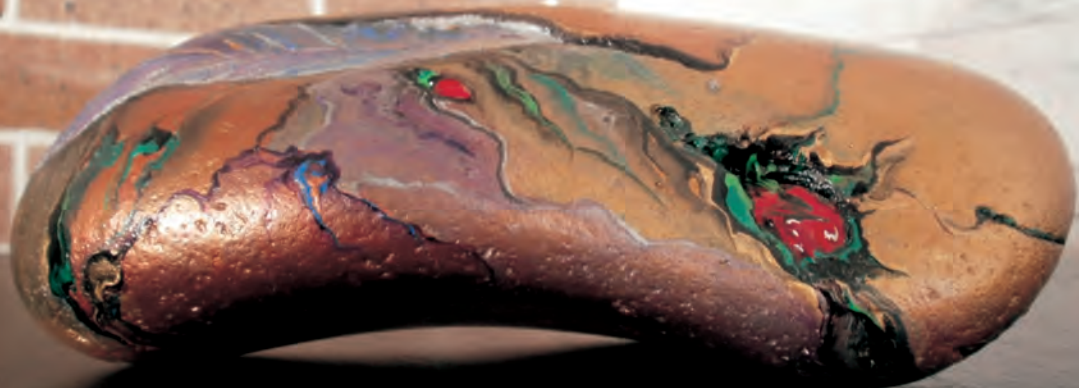
83 Zeyrek Quarter and Church of Pantocrator

The Zeyrek Quarter of Istanbul was recognised under the UNESCO World Heritage Site Scheme in 1971, and is one of four zones included in the Historic Areas of Istanbul listing. The wooden houses of Zeyrek were built in the early 19th century and typically have bays overlooking the street with small gardens to the rear. Stroll around the area to get a sense of Istanbul's traditional street layout that has steep and narrow winding streets linked by stone stairs. If you have the time, take a look at the Church of the Pantocrator (Zeyrek Camii), once the centrepiece of one the city's most important religious foundations, the Monastery of the Pantocrator.

TRAM STOP: Aksaray, then bus along Atatürk Bulvarı



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The Asian Shore

Until relatively recently, the city of Istanbul comprised the area south of the Golden Horn within the city walls, with other districts being separate areas. Today, through gradual urban sprawl, the city has come to be viewed as half European, half Asian. The Asian Shore may not have quite the charm of the Sultanahmet or the pizzazz of Beyoğlu but it is far less hectic than the European side and has some important points of interest, including the Şemsi Ahmet Paşa Mosque, Leander's Tower, the Florence Nightingale Museum, the shopping district of Bağdat Caddesi and Beylerbeyi Palace. A new metro line is scheduled to link the European and Asian shores, making transit times quicker, but there can be no better way than arriving by boat at one of several ports along the shoreline.

traveltip

Just to the right of the Üsküdar ferry terminus, you'll find a floating marketplace moored on the quay side (Üsküdar belediyesi kadın el ürünleri pazar yerleri). A project of the local municipality to give employment to and support women making handicrafts at home, this is the place to find an unusual gift... and to meet the woman who made it!



84 Üsküdar market

In Istanbul, you're never far from a market. And the Asian Shore's no exception. There's a vibrant bazaar across the busy main road from Üsküdar's ferry pier. Filled with local produce that will delight your senses, you're sure to find everything you need to create a delicious meal.

FERRY PIER: Üsküdar

OPEN: Daily

GPS: N41 01.506 E29 00.962


traveltip

With hundreds of restaurants to choose from, selecting the right establishment can be a challenge. Ask for a recommendation from your hotel or a local resident to be sure that you're eating authentic Turkish cuisine, or check istanbuleats.com to uncover hidden gourmet delights! But if all you're looking for is a quick, nutritious, inexpensive meal, then try one of the cafeteria style restaurants where you select your meal from dishes behind a counter and the food is brought to your table.

85 Turkish cuisine

One of the best ways to learn about a country and its culture is through its cuisine but sometimes it's difficult to know where to start. Before you leave the Asian Shore, one excellent spot to sample a wide variety of hot and cold, savoury and sweet Turkish and Ottoman specialities is at the famous Kanaat Lokantasi restaurant in Üsküdar. Founded in 1933, it has built a reputation for delighting the most jaded taste buds and customers can even watch the chefs in action.

FERRY PIER: Üsküdar

OPEN: Daily

GPS: N41 01.544 E29 00.973

For more information: 📞 0216 553 37 91

travel tip

After all the walking you'll be doing in Istanbul, your shoes may get a little dusty. You can get them cleaned by one of the shoe shiners dotted around Istanbul. There's usually a man in Yeni Valide Mosque's courtyard or you'll probably find one in Eminönü Square on the European side of Istanbul. For a few lira, your shoes will look as good as new!



86 Yeni Valide Mosque

There are so many mosques in Istanbul that visitors could be forgiven for thinking that they must be all much the same. Look a little closer and you'll find that each has a unique character and charm. The distinctive feature of the Yeni Valide Mosque, located not far from Üsküdar's market, is the Koranic school built above its large arched gateway leading into a tree lined spacious courtyard. Built over a two year period (1708-1710) by Sultan Ahmed III to honour his mother Gülnus Emetullah, this mosque was a grand complex, not all of which has survived to this day. Visitors can get a sense of its former greatness from the decorative elements on the tomb of the Sultan's mother, for example.

FERRY PIER: Üsküdar

OPEN: Daily

GPS: N41 01.506 E29 00.875


traveltip

You'll be very lucky to spot any birds near this mosque; the sea breezes come from two directions (the Sea of Marmara and the Bosphorus) and keep the birdlife to a minimum and the mosque's roof very clean!

87 Şemsi Ahmet Paşa Mosque

If you're feeling overwhelmed by the grand scale of many of the mosques in Istanbul, then the Şemsi Ahmet Paşa Mosque might be for you. Set on a delightful waterfront location in Üsküdar, with a clear view of the Bosphorus Bridge, it is one of the smallest mosques in the city, yet designed to perfection with everything in miniature. Built in 1580 by Sinan for the then grand vizier Şemsi Ahmet Paşa, it has beautifully ornate stained glass windows. The mosque's small garden overlooking the Bosphorus is a tranquil place to rest awhile on your tour of the Asian Shore.

FERRY PIER: Üsküdar

OPEN: Daily

GPS: N41 01.506 E29 00.875

travel tip

If you want to stretch your legs and breathe the sea air, walk along the waterfront from Şemsi Ahmet Paşa Mosque to the pier for the boat to the Maiden's Tower. It's a pleasant 15 minute walk and will help you work up an appetite for a meal at the Maiden Tower's restaurant or café (tel: 216 342 4747; kizkulesi.com.tr) open well into the night and accessible by evening ferry. If you prefer to stay on dry land, have a cup of coffee and play a game of backgammon at one of the cafés nestled against the sea wall. You won't get a better view of the Tower than that!



00 Leander's Tower (Kız Kulesi)

One of the first things pleasure cruise passengers see on arrival or departure from Istanbul is Leander's Tower. Built on a small rocky island at the point where the Bosphorus meets the Marmara Sea, this tower, and the island on which it stands, has undergone several reincarnations in its long history. A customs office in the 4th century B.C., a quarantine hospital during the 1830 cholera epidemic and a defence tower in Byzantine and Ottoman times, the tower was destroyed by fire in 1716 and rebuilt in 1725. View it from afar or up close after a short boat ride from the Asian Shore. Don't forget to take time to read about the legends surrounding the tower's past—they involve a princess and a snake!

FERRY PIER: Üsküdar

OPEN: Daily 9.00-18.30

GPS: N41 01.266 E29 00.415

For more information: 📞 0216 342 4747 🌐 www.kizkulesi.com.tr


traveltip

Want to learn the art of ebru from a master? Then enrol in a course given by Hikmet Barutcugil at Ebristan. You will be mesmerized by the mystery and beauty of this ancient technique! Although it's only a short walk from the ferry pier, it can be a little difficult to find Ebristan so phone for directions before setting off.

89 The art of ebru

The ancient art of ebru—or paper marbling—traces its history back to Central Asia. Introduced to the Ottoman Empire in the 15th century, one of the best places to enjoy this unique art form today is at Ebristan, where ebruzen (or master of marbling) Hikmet Barutcugil has revived the tradition and opened a school of marbling. Be prepared to be amazed by the multi-coloured masterpieces that emerge seemingly effortlessly from a tray of water and natural pigments mixed with ox gall (to prevent the paints from sinking below the surface of the water). Truly breathtaking!

FERRY PIER: Harem

OPEN: Daily 10.00-18.00. Closed Sunday

GPS: N41 00.902 E029 00.711

For more information: 📞 0216 334 5934 🌐 www.ebristan.com

traveltip

Visits to the Florence Nightingale Museum are strictly by appointment. Fax your name and contact details to 0216 310 7929 at least 48 hours before your arrival and wait for confirmation. Please note that your appointment may be cancelled at the last minute due to military activities at the barracks.



90 Florence Nightingale Museum, Selimiye Barracks

Standing proud on the hill on the Asian Shore above Üsküdar, the Selimiye Barracks (Selimiye Kışlası) make a dramatic sight for visitors arriving by sea. The present brick building replaced the original wooden barracks built by Selim III in 1799 and destroyed in a fire shortly after. Used as a military hospital during the Crimean War (1853-56), the barracks became associated with Florence Nightingale who lived and worked in the northeast tower from 1854. Visitors to the small Florence Nightingale museum—the only part of the barracks open to the public—can see the rooms she used and the famous lamp which gained her the description “the lady of the lamp”.

FERRY PIER: Harem

OPEN: Daily 9.00-16.00. Closed Monday & Thursday

GPS: N41 00.304 E29 00.955

For more information: [f](https://www.facebook.com/florence-nightingale-museum) 0216 310 7929


travel tip

After a long journey, travellers can enjoy a drink at a small quay-side café while they wait for a ferry to Eminönü. It's just outside the station, and next to the ornately tiled Ottoman-era Şehir Hatları dock.

91 Haydarpaşa Railway Station

Looking more like a castle from the outside than a train station, Haydarpaşa Station is an impressive place to arrive in or depart from Istanbul. It is the terminus station for trains to and from Anatolia (Asian Turkey) and has the important Istanbul-Ankara link. Suburban trains also depart from Haydarpaşa and travel south-east along the Sea of Marmara shore as far as Gebze. The Neoclassical building, a gift to the Sultan from Kaiser Wilhelm II, was built by the Anatolia-Baghdad Corporation between 1906 and 1908. It was partially destroyed by fire due to sabotage during World War I and again in 1979 when a tanker ran ashore and exploded causing the stain glass windows to shatter. Despite these events, the building remains a nostalgic reminder of travel in days gone by.

FERRY PIER: Haydarpaşa

OPEN: Daily

GPS: N40 59.757 E29 01.073

traveltip

The Toy Museum runs puppet making workshops and puppet and magic shows for children in a 70 seat theatre. Contact the museum (tel: 0216 359 4550) to find out what's on during your visit to Istanbul.



92 Toy Museum

Opened in 2005, the Toy Museum was founded by the poet Sunay Akin and designed by the stage designer Ayhan Doğan. And, with three huge model giraffe standing in front of the museum's entrance it's hard to miss! Arranged over five floors of a historic villa, the museum is an Aladdin's cave of more than 5,000 vintage toys from teddy bears to toy cars, dolls' houses to space ships, toy cowboys and Indians to toy astronauts. See if your children can find Mickey Mouse while you sit in the museum's pretty café decorated with yet more toys!

TRAIN STATION: From Haydarpaşa to Göztepe

BUS STOP: From Kadıköy to Göztepe

OPEN: Weekdays 9.30-18.00; Weekends 9.30-19.00. Closed Monday

GPS: N40 58.553 E29 04.235

For more information: 📞 0216 359 4550 🌐 www.istanbuloyuncakmuzesi.com


traveltip

It's much easier to walk down Büyük Çamlıca than up it. But if you don't think you've walked enough, you can always hike up the neighbouring hill—Little Pine Hill (Küçük Çamlıca)!

93 Big Pine Hill (Büyük Çamlıca)

At a height of 267 metres, Çamlıca Hill is the highest point in Istanbul and affords one of the best views of the city and the Bosphorus. Formerly a recreation area of Ottoman rulers, Çamlıca Hill has been a source of inspiration for poets and writers through the ages. Today it is a pleasant picnic spot filled with pine trees, grassy banks and flowers and on a clear day there's a glorious view, though TV masts obscure parts of the panorama. Stroll through the gardens and enjoy a freshly made Turkish flatbread filled with cheese, meat or spinach (known locally as gözleme)... or if you fancy something sweet, how about a crêpe? Alternatively, the garden's restaurant is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

FERRY PIER: Üsküdar, then bus to Çamlıca and 30 minute walk

OPEN: Daily 9.00-23.00

GPS: N41 01.721 E29 04.163

travel tip

The easiest and cheapest way to get to Beylerbeyi Palace is to take a ferry from Beşiktaş (close to the Naval Museum) to Üsküdar, and then hop on a bus or minibus in the direction of Beylerbeyi. The stop for the palace is just after the Bosphorus Bridge. Enjoy a refreshing drink in the Palace's garden café—you'll find several dramatic animal sculptures hidden among the trees too!



94 Beylerbeyi Palace

Passengers on river cruises up and down the Bosphorus will notice Beylerbeyi Palace set on the banks of the Asian Shore, close to the Bosphorus Bridge. Add this to your “must see” itinerary. Surrounded by manicured, shaded gardens and framed either side of its water frontage by bathing pavilions—one for the harem and one for the selamlık (men’s quarters)—the current palace was built between 1861 and 1865 for Sultan Abdül Aziz as a summer residence and to entertain visiting heads of state. Though not as opulent as Dolmabahçe Palace, it is a fine example of a traditional Turkish home plan with Oriental and European décor.

BUS STOP: From Üsküdar to Beylerbeyi

OPEN: Daily 9.00-16.00 except Monday and Thursday
May close earlier if ticket quota exceeded.

GPS: N41 02.577 E29 02.495

For more information: ☎ 0216 321 9320

🌐 www.millisaraylar.gov.tr


traveltip

The area in front of the Anadolu Hisarı has been populated by elegant seaside mansions constructed in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries and is a pleasant place to walk and study the architecture of that time.

95 Asian Fortress (Anadolu Hisarı)

Anadolu Hisarı's history can be traced back to the late 14th century, when Sultan Bayezid built a small fortress as part of his preparations for the siege of Constantinople, with the aim of capturing the city from the Byzantines and expanding the young Ottoman Empire. Subsequently, the fort was enlarged by Mehmet II, the Conqueror. Situated at the narrowest point of the Bosphorus—some 660 metres wide—opposite Rumeli Fortress on the European side, the remains of the fortress are best viewed from outside and make for an excellent photo opportunity set against the marina.

FERRY: Anadolu Hisarı Pier

BUS STOP: From Rumeli over Fatih Sultan Mehmet Bridge

GPS: N41 04.954 E29 04.010

traveltip

From the waterfront side of the Küçüksu Palace, there's a photogenic view of the European side of Istanbul towards Rumeli Fortress. And, if you take a boat trip on the Bosphorus, you should be able to spot Küçüksu Palace from the water for another prize winning shot!



96 Küçüksu Palace (Küçüksu Kasrı)

If you're on the Asian Shore and looking for a unique place for a picnic, then head to Küçüksu Palace, which has charming gardens open to the public. This relatively small palace, built in 1856, was used by Ottoman sultans for short stays during country excursions and hunting trips due to its proximity to the Küçüksu and Göksu rivers, romantically known as the "Sweet Waters of Asia" in Ottoman times. Inside and out, the palace has a grand air about it, with an extremely ornate façade and twin staircases sweeping around an ornamental pool and fountain in its grounds and exquisite Bohemian crystal chandeliers, delightful wall paintings and fine examples of Hereke carpets decorating the interior. The perfect place to imagine life in Ottoman times!

BUS STOP: From Üsküdar to Beykoz

OPEN: Daily 9:30–16:00. Closed Monday and Thursday

GPS: N41 04.694 E029 03.924

For more information: ☎ 0212 236 9000

🌐 www.millisaraylar.gov.tr

**traveltip**

If you'd like to try your hand at fishing, you can usually buy an inexpensive rod and bait from one of the vendors on Galata Bridge.

97 Fishing

Surrounded as it is by water on all sides, visitors to Istanbul should not be surprised by the sight of people fishing off every available waterfront location. While Galata Bridge spanning the Golden Horn is a favourite of many, the pier in front of the Şemsi Ahmed Paşa Mosque is an excellent place for a stroll and to watch people catching their supper. Another magnet for fishermen is the waterfront running from Bebek to Rumeli and beyond, where fish seem to bite every minute. Over on the Asian Shore the Göksu river flowing past Anadolu Hisarı is a pleasant spot for anglers to try their luck.

traveltip

Istanbul Yacht Club (istyachtclub.com) is located in Fenerbahçe, next to Kalamış Marina.



98 Sailing

With water at every turn in Istanbul, it's not surprising that sailing is a popular pastime, both for spectators and yachtsmen/women. With several sailing regattas organised each year by the Istanbul Yacht Club and Turkish Offshore Racing Club, sailing enthusiasts are sure to find something of interest. If you have your Yachtmaster certificate, ask about chartering a yacht from Kalamış Marina in Fenerbahçe (seturmarinas.com) or Marinturk in Pendik (marinturk.com.tr) on the Asian Shore in Kadıköy district. For those who prefer to keep their feet firmly on dry land, there's a pleasant waterfront park to visit, the Romantika Fenerbahçe Park, on the peninsular near the marina from where you'll be rewarded with a beautiful view of the Princes' Islands while your friends mess about on the water!


traveltip

Getting to one of the Princes' Islands couldn't be easier... take the tram from Eminönü to Kabataş and then catch a ferry from the adjacent pier to Büyükdada. Most ferries also stop at Heybeliada (Saddle Bag Island). Don't forget to ask for a timetable so you arrive in time for the last boat back! If you prefer, most travel agents in Istanbul will organise a door-to-door tour which typically includes a tour guide and a horse-drawn carriage ride.

99 Princes' Islands

It's amazing to think that just a 90 minute ferry ride away from Istanbul is an island paradise waiting to be explored. And, after a footslogging tour of the city, what better way to relax and unwind than on an island where the only modes of transport are bicycle, horse-drawn carriages (called fayton) and "shanks' pony"—your legs? There are nine islands in the Princes' archipelago, so named because princes were banished and imprisoned there in Byzantine times. The biggest and most populated is Büyükdada (Big Island). Here, stroll along quiet tree-lined streets and admire the fine wooden mansions and pavilions, many with immaculate gardens bursting with tulips in the spring and bourgainvillea in the summer. Or hire a carriage or bike for a tour of the whole island. Don't forget your swimming costume if you plan to take a dip at one of the island's rugged beaches.

FERRY: Kabataş to Büyükdada



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traveltip

The short and long routes taken by the horse-drawn carriages include a stop at the base of the hill below the monastery. There are two drinking water fountains on the way up and a restaurant at the top where you can catch your breath before descending back down the hill where your carriage awaits. Make sure you agree a price with your carriage driver before you set off from town because they may not wait and it's a long walk back to the ferry terminus!

100 St George's Monastery, Büyükada Island

The hike up to St George's (Aya Yorgi) Monastery is not for the faint hearted but it's worth the effort! The very steep 30 minute climb through woods to the summit of Yüce-tepe, the island's highest peak, unfolds into a breathtaking view of the undulating green hills below, neighbouring islands and the distant Asian shore. Every year on April 23, thousands of pilgrims of all faiths journey from as far afield as the Balkans and Russia and make their way to the monastery as part of an age-old fertility ritual, unwinding spools of thread as they go up the hill. The monastery has a 1,000 year history and the chapel is open to the public. Adorned on all sides with silver and painted images of St George and other religious figures, it is as breathtaking as the panoramic view outside.

GPS: N40 50.935 E029 07.138

traveltip

Visitors to Bursa will be pleasantly surprised that prices are quite a bit cheaper than in Istanbul. So save some of your souvenir budget for shopping in this lovely city!

101 Bursa

Had your fill of Istanbul and want to venture a little further afield? Then why not consider a day trip to the city of Bursa, the old Ottoman capital! It's a relaxing 1.5 to two-hour ferry ride from Kabataş or Yenikapı, followed by a 30 minute bus ride to the tram station where you can catch a tram into the centre of the city.

Your first stop should be the **Grand Mosque (Ulu Cami)** on the corner of the bazaar area (GPS: N40 11.041 E029 03.734). This impressive mosque built 1396 to 1400 is rectangular in shape with 20 domes. Its striking interior is adorned with magnificent black and gold calligraphy and there's an ornate three-tiered ablutions fountain beneath the central dome.

After your visit to the Grand Mosque, stroll around the streets leading to the covered bazaar and stop off at the **Koza Han**—an Ottoman courtyard used for silk trading—to get a sense of what life must have been like in Bursa in times gone by. Then, as you head towards Bursa's central square, look out for the pretty **Bursa Waterfall**




traveltip

There are many more fascinating places to visit in Bursa so plan to stay overnight to get to know this city and its delightful people. The friendly staff at the Tourism Office will be happy to advise you...call 0224 220 1848.



(GPS: N40 10.871 E029 04.161). Behind the statue of Atatürk in the square you'll find the **Bursa City Museum** (GPS: N40 10.946 E029 03.999).

This is a modern exhibition space with displays about the historical, geographical, cultural and economic development of Bursa. Be sure to check out the basement level where a street of artisans has been recreated.


Next the splendid **Green (Yeşil) Tomb** (GPS: N40 10.891 E029 04.486) covered in green tiles should be high on your "must see" list. Here, Mehmet I together with his sons, daughters and nursemaid are interred in a dazzling space. And finally, the **Green (Yeşil) Mosque** (GPS: N40 10.943 E029 04.468) next door is perhaps the most famous of Bursa's monuments and considered to be the finest Ottoman mosque to be built before the conquest of Constantinople, definitely a fitting way to end your visit to Bursa!

A PHOTOGRAPHIC TRIBUTE

For photographer **Elżbieta Smoleńska**, it was two dreams coming true at once: being able to visit a destination that always fascinated her, and meeting a photography icon she admired.

A Portrait *of* Istanbul

Right, Ara Güler: The legendary photographer kindly agreed to let me take this portrait. Cherished memory of a wonderful afternoon.

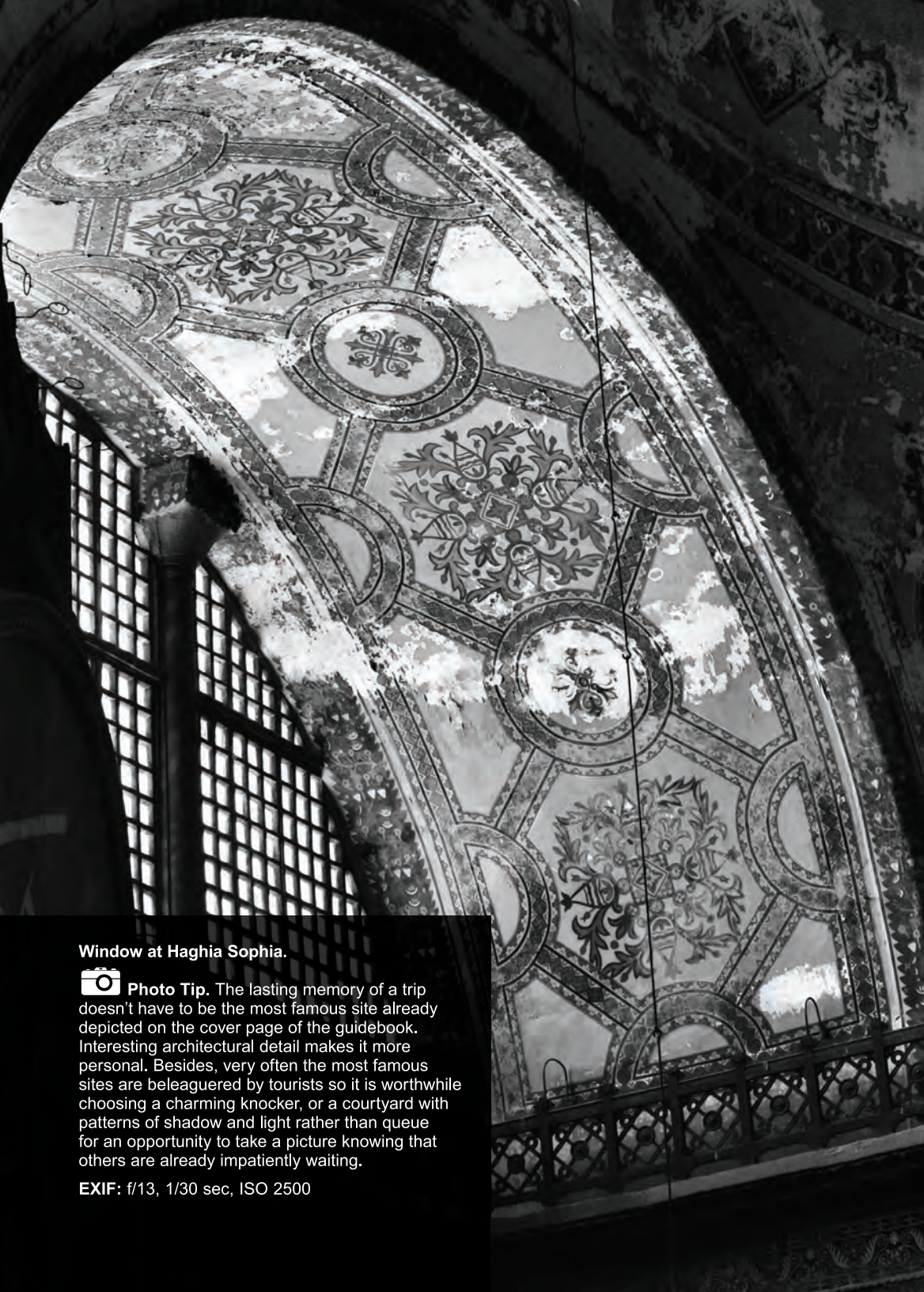
 **Photo Tip.** The soft, natural light coming from the street was just perfect. Whenever I can, I try to use natural light or diffused ambient light. I'd rather not use flash if I can avoid it. I find that the less equipment you use, the closer you can get to the person you'd like to photograph. Talking to your subject helps to break the ice and forget about the shutter speed...

EXIF: f/5, 1/25 sec, ISO 640

I always dreamt about going to Istanbul which for me embodies the European fascination for the Orient. However, for many years, other travel destinations took precedence... Iran, Nepal, Ethiopia, Libya, Cambodia and Laos, to name but a few.

Finally my dream came true—and in what a great fashion! I wanted to do what many travellers envisage: marvel at the beautiful columns and candelabras of Hagia Sophia,





Window at Hagia Sophia.



Photo Tip. The lasting memory of a trip doesn't have to be the most famous site already depicted on the cover page of the guidebook. Interesting architectural detail makes it more personal. Besides, very often the most famous sites are beleaguered by tourists so it is worthwhile choosing a charming knocker, or a courtyard with patterns of shadow and light rather than queue for an opportunity to take a picture knowing that others are already impatiently waiting.

EXIF: f/13, 1/30 sec, ISO 2500



admire the ceiling of the Blue Mosque and lose myself in the countless alleys of the Grand Bazaar. And I did all that, and much more, thanks to a lucky set of events....

I started however with what I saw as the obligatory visit to Orhan Pamuk's Museum of Innocence. For me Istanbul is as much a real city as a phenomenon created by the imagination of the writers who crafted a grand picture of it with their words. By entering the Museum of Innocence (which from the outside is a rather inconspicuous house), you step into a different world filled with objects and photographs from a long gone era.

Portrait of a seller in front of Chora Church. This charming gentleman kindly let me take a photograph of him. He had such a warm, contagious smile and reminded me of my own grandfather.



Photo Tip. When taking portrait shots I try to choose the background which is complementary to the complexion or glow of the person I am depicting. Reducing the colour scheme helps the composition of the picture.

EXIF: f/6.3, 1/320 sec, ISO 2500

**Opposite page: Matchbox girl—
Street scene, Suleymaniye.**

I decided to lower my camera in the direction of this scene in order to be closer to this little figure sitting on the pavement.



Photo Tip. Don't be afraid to get your knees dirty or climb on a stone in order to achieve a better view of your subject.

EXIF: f/5.6, 1/125 sec, ISO 160

Still enchanted by Pamuk's nostalgic view of Beyoğlu, I decided to visit a couple of nearby bric-a-brac shops, as if trying to find my own little talisman from the past. As usual I was also taking pictures. Soon I realised I was not alone in my quest. This is how I met Ali Mushaima, the publisher of this very book.

Ali suggested lunch at a coffee place that he knew. When I sat down under enormous black and white panoramas of old Istanbul and intimate photographs of its people, I realised that I was in a restaurant owned by one of the world's great photographers, Ara Güler.

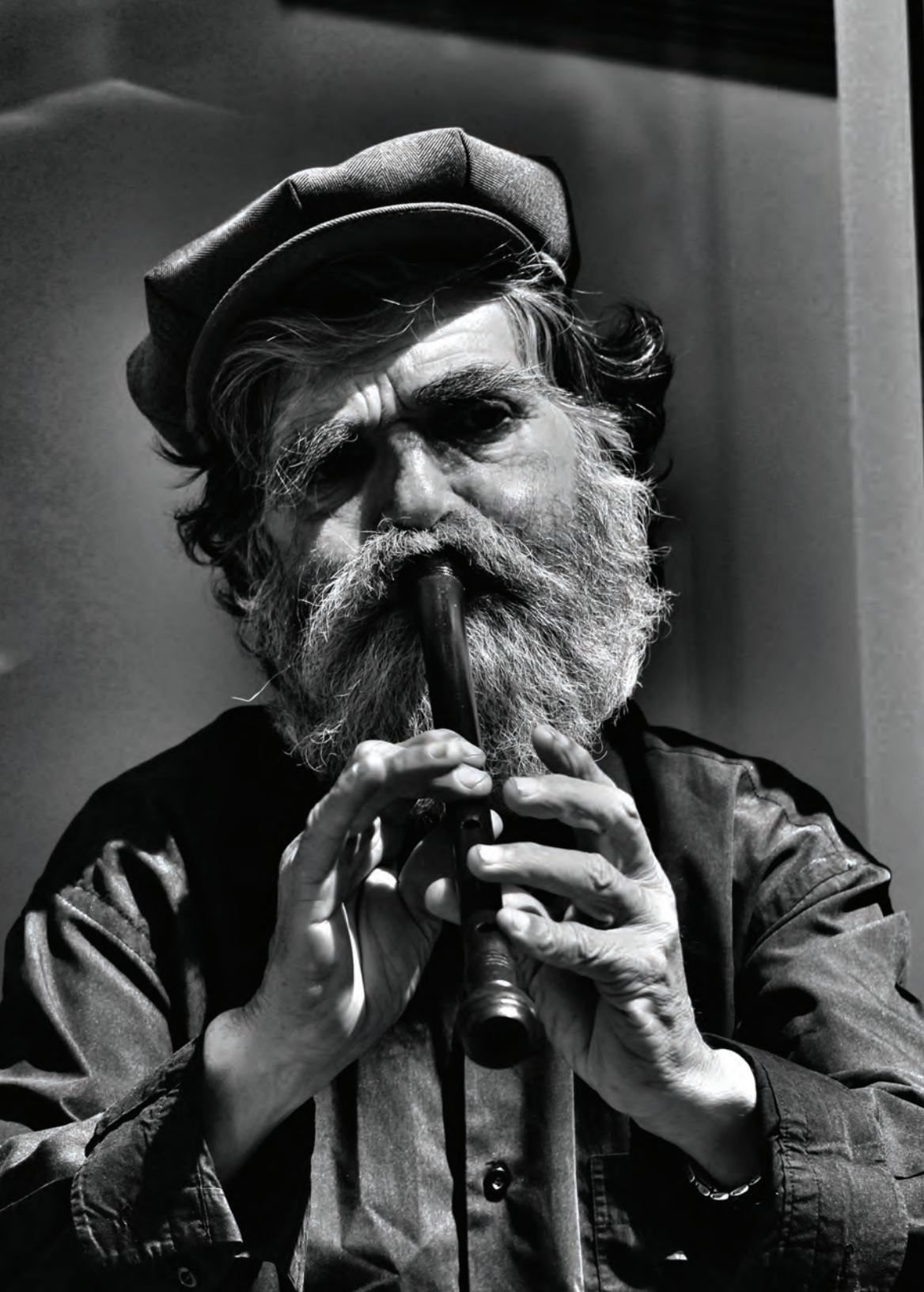
As soon as I heard that the legendary "Eye of Istanbul" himself sometimes came to Café Ara, I immediately hatched a plan. The very same day I went to a bookshop and bought the biggest volume containing Güler's photographs I could lay my hands on. It happened to be the beautifully produced *Ara Güler's Istanbul* (Thames & Hudson).

The day after, at noon, I went to the restaurant. Sure enough, before my espresso went cold, I spotted a silhouette slowly approaching. I hesitated a while, and then went over to the table. "Sir, could I ask you for an autograph?" I asked.

Güler raised his eyes: "What is your name, child?" "Elżbieta," I answered.

"Hmmm...Polish name! My first love was called Leokadia."





After this introduction, the conversation proceeded with amazing ease. We looked through the book of Güler's photographs and talked about light and life, travelling and childhood memories. Güler was extremely kind, attentive and, above all, witty. Despite having met so many famous people (Marc Chagall, Pablo Picasso, Winston Churchill and Indira Gandhi come to mind), he still had a great gift of being simply curious about another person. I felt as if I had known him for a long time.

Güler was interested to see Istanbul through my eyes and asked me to show him my photographs. He particularly liked a portrait of a flute player, which I had taken just a moment before we met in a nearby street.

With hindsight I appreciate how lucky I was to have this afternoon with Güler and his friends. While in Istanbul I met many great characters: carpet sellers from Uzbekistan and Turkmen traders of antique silver; bazaar shop owners who can muster an invitation for a cup of tea in all possible languages of the world, and simply warm Istanbulites who create the very atmosphere of this great city. I have seen glorious architecture and ventured into lesser known backstreets.

With my camera I tried to capture the essence of the mood of the city. Something which so many photographers and writers alike have tried before me.

Opposite page: Flute player.

A flutist plays for his imaginary flock on fashionable and hip İstiklal Caddesi. Maybe it is not surprising that just nearby is Mevlevihanesi—the Hall of Whirling Dervishes.

EXIF: f/8, 1/320sec, ISO 320

In his 1896 book *Constantinople* (translated into English and republished in 2005), famed Italian author Edmondo de Amicis marvelled:

One can light one's cigars in Europe, and drop the ash in Asia. On getting up in the morning, we can enquire: 'What part of the world shall I visit today?' We have a choice of two continents and two seas. We have at our command horses standing saddled in every square, sailboats in every cove, steamboats at a hundred landing stages; the darting caique, the flying talika, and an army of guides speaking all the languages of Europe.

Do you wish to hear an Italian comedy? To see the dancing dervishes? Or the antics of Karagöz in the Turkish puppet-show? Or see gypsy acrobats? Or listen to a storyteller telling an old Arabian tale? Or would you prefer a Greek theatre? To hear an imam preach or watch the Sultan pass by? All you need to do is ask.

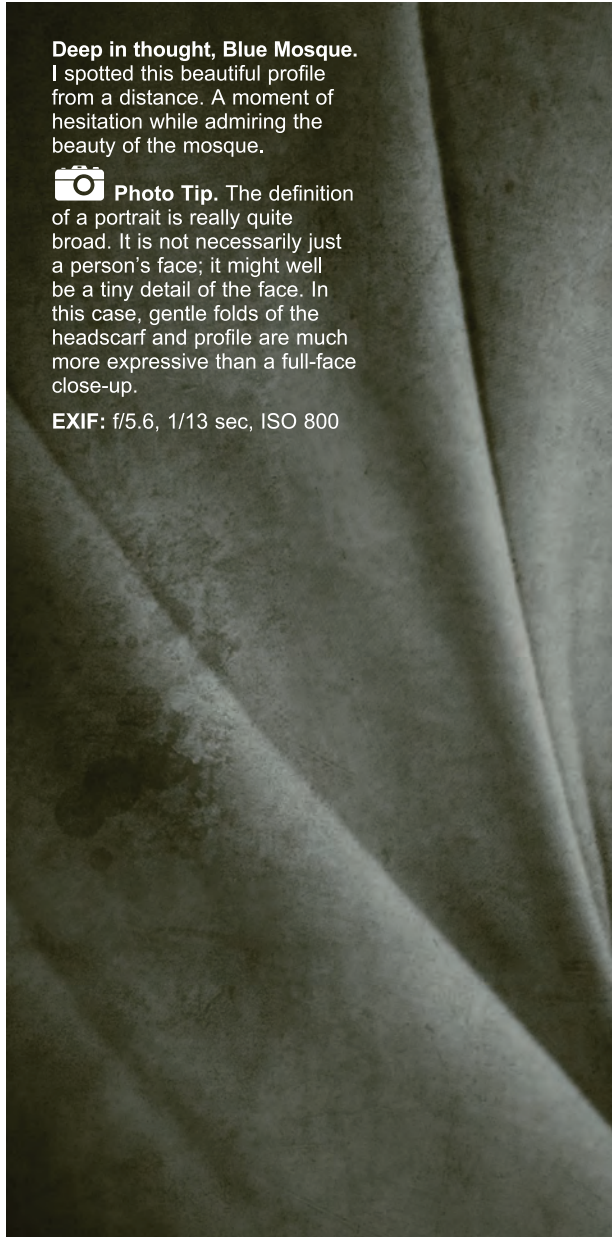
And you couldn't agree more!
Our views on smoking cigars and our modes of transport may have changed but the wealth of things you can do in Istanbul is still just as amazing. All you need to do is ask....

Deep in thought, Blue Mosque. I spotted this beautiful profile from a distance. A moment of hesitation while admiring the beauty of the mosque.



Photo Tip. The definition of a portrait is really quite broad. It is not necessarily just a person's face; it might well be a tiny detail of the face. In this case, gentle folds of the headscarf and profile are much more expressive than a full-face close-up.

EXIF: f/5.6, 1/13 sec, ISO 800





Just calling...

Street scene.

A glimpse of café life in one of the streets near Topkapi Palace.

 **Photo Tip.**

Although tempting, it is best not to check your shots as you go. You can do that in the evening when more relaxed. Sometimes the best images are not quite what you were hoping to depict. Not what you planned. Let yourself be surprised.

EXIF:

f/5.6, 1/320 sec,
ISO 2500, focal
length 260 mm



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**Opposite page:
Looking into the
past—Mehtarân.**

After stepping outside Haghia Sophia I heard distant music. I followed the sound and came across a performance of Mehtarân (Ottoman army band which played martial tunes during military campaigns). The wonderful crimson of the uniform made me think of Orhan Pamuk's *My Name is Red*.

EXIF: f/5.6, exp 1/100 sec, ISO 250, focal length 300mm

**Right: Shoeshiner's
tea break; near
Galata Tower.**

The absence of the shoeshiner and this steaming cup of tea was quite telling...



Photo Tip.

I wouldn't despair over the lack of something which you were expecting to photograph. Sometimes it is more dramatic if the subject is missing.

EXIF: f/6.3, 1/250 sec, ISO 100, focal length 250mm





Ticket to Harem? This was one of those surprise moments. I was just about to take a picture of myself reflected in a window of the ticket booth at the Bosphorus—I couldn't resist it after seeing the Harem sign. I would have executed my plan if it wasn't for this charming ticket seller suddenly peeking out the tiny window. In a split second I changed the direction of my camera...



Photo Tip. Sometimes the best thought out plan has to be changed. Yet again intuition and quick reaction is much more important than having a well-equipped camera bag. A simple camera is just as good, as long as it is there when you need it.

EXIF: f/5, exp 1/80 sec, ISO 160



Playing the flute for strangers. I saw this girl every evening. Tiny figure and imposing shadow of a man walking past.



Photo Tip. If you would like to take candid pictures in the evening or low light conditions, you need to increase the ISO setting or use a fast lens, for example, a 50mm f/1.2.

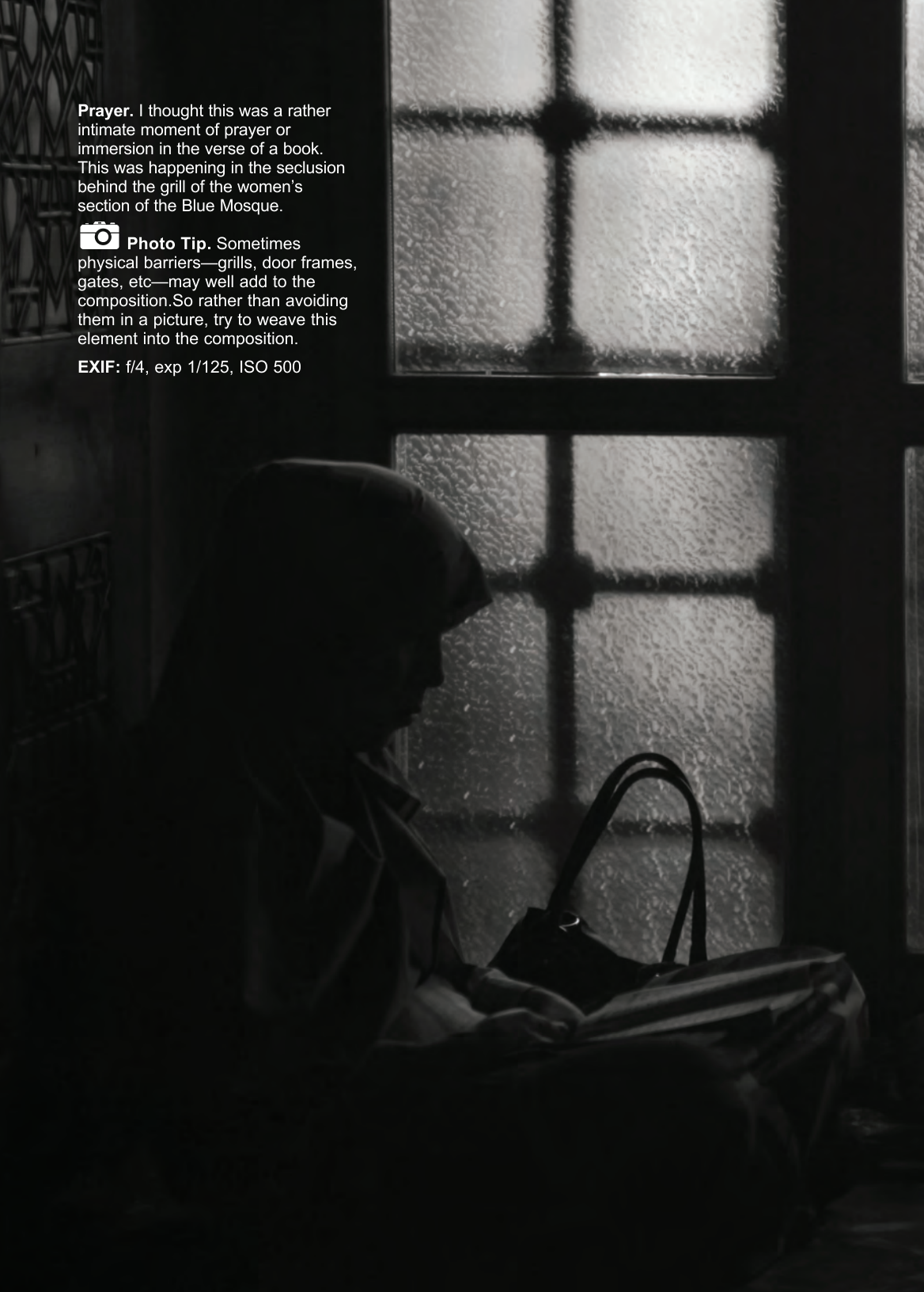
EXIF: f/4.5, exp 1/60 sec, ISO 2500

Prayer. I thought this was a rather intimate moment of prayer or immersion in the verse of a book. This was happening in the seclusion behind the grill of the women's section of the Blue Mosque.



Photo Tip. Sometimes physical barriers—grills, door frames, gates, etc—may well add to the composition. So rather than avoiding them in a picture, try to weave this element into the composition.

EXIF: f/4, exp 1/125, ISO 500





Yo! Ahmed. Walking past a courtyard near Taksim Square, I saw this rather striking graffiti and when I looked down there was a silhouette of a man talking on the phone. The title for the photograph was written on the wall...



Photo Tip. Just have your camera at the ready and follow your instinct.

EXIF: f/8, exp 1/60 sec, ISO 400





Arresting eyes. Portrait of a salesman who tried to convince me to visit a carpet shop. I declined the offer but not without asking him for permission to take a photo.



Photo Tip. I always ask whether I may take a portrait picture although often people behave in a more natural way when they are not conscious of you doing it. If you feel that that might be the case, try to ease the awkwardness with a conversation.

EXIF: f/6.3, exp 1/320 sec, ISO 100



Blind love. Dusk was just descending on an empty street which not long before was packed with tourists lining up to visit the Haghia Sophia. Suddenly I spotted this grandmother carrying a sweet burden: her granddaughter.

EXIF: f/5.6, 1/250 sec, ISO 160

Mosque at dusk. Outline of the elegant domes of a mosque—minimalistic, yet rich.



Photo Tip. It is tempting to take panoramic pictures of great buildings. However a small but characteristic fragment of the building might be far more expressive.

EXIF: f/16, exp 1/250 sec, ISO 400



Waiting for a message from the Pasha. Taken near the Haghia Sophia, this picture offers a striking, slightly humorous, contrast between past and present: elaborate brocade costume and sleek new mobile phones. A figure engrossed in his own world, oblivious to the hustle and bustle of the street.

EXIF: f/5.6, exp 1/160, ISO 250





Number 10, but not quite Downing Street. Old signage of a beautiful wooden abandoned house in the backstreets near Topkapi Palace. Any association with Downing Street is purely numerical.

EXIF: f/3.5, exp 1/125 sec, ISO 1000



Story teller. Among the vintage memorabilia and coin collectors sat this gentleman who seemed to attract the attention of tourists and old Istanbulites in equal measure. I didn't understand a word of his story, but he was captivating. He nodded politely when I gestured permission to take a photograph. He was clearly used to this kind of request.

EXIF: f/5, exp 1/200sec, ISO 200

Cherub, Blue Mosque.

In this beautiful, intimate scene, a mother tries to capture her baby's angelic face with her iPhone. Her dainty raised hand against the soft light seeping through the window reminds me of the delicate brushstrokes of Renaissance painters.

EXIF: EXIF f/4, exp 1/5 sec, ISO 400





Blue Mosque, Worshippers.

A little microcosm of the courtyard of the Blue Mosque. Pious Muslims and tourists who come to visit this magnificent building are all united by the ritual of "sun worshipping".

EXIF: f/11, exp 1/640, ISO 100





Haghia Sophia. Ex Oriente Lux...This row of marvellous chandeliers were meant to dazzle the believers in the time of the Byzantine Empire and it is still stunning. The imposing, yet simple, design and contrast between black and white makes a very minimalistic picture.

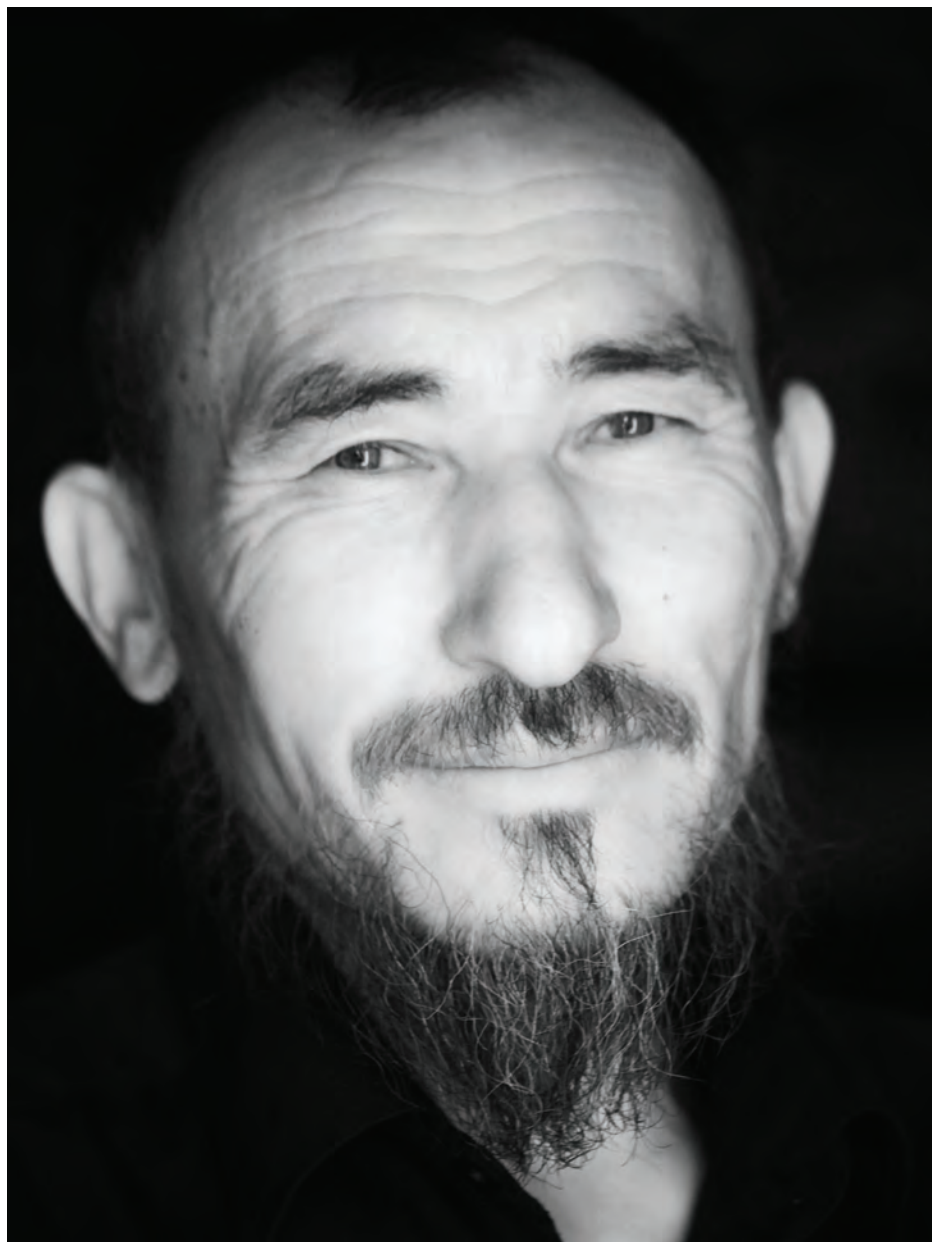
EXIF: f/10, 1/30sec, ISO 2000

Opposite page: Carpet seller, Grand Bazaar. It was a chance meeting. The customary invitation for a cup of tea and stories about Turkmen carpets followed with ease. Tea was the icebreaker. Wonderful and quiet moment in the otherwise bustling bazaar. Soft light coming from the cracks in the roof just gently lingers on this gentleman's face.



Photo Tip. In this case I had to ask my subject to step outside of the shop. If you need it and it is not too much trouble, you should ask your subject to move towards a flattering spot of light. However, it is a matter of careful judgment; you wouldn't like the person to feel that they are part of a photosession. With a courteous smile I try to make the matter as natural and low key as possible.

EXIF: f/4.5, 1/40 sec, ISO 400, 35 focal length



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Istanbul Extreme! In a backstreet of İstiklal Cadesi, filled with nice little boutiques, shopkeepers were relaxing in the late afternoon in front of their shops. This scene struck me as a great juxtaposition: a dynamic and trendy poster, and the almost sculpture-like pose of a gentleman enjoying his siesta.

EXIF: f/7.1, 1/60 sec, ISO 250

Biography



Picture: Melih Berk

Elżbieta Smoleńska with Ara Güler.

Elżbieta Smoleńska grew up in Białystok, a culturally diverse region in eastern Poland. Proximity to the country's borders sparked her interest in travel from a very early age.

She studied Polish literature and theatre in Warsaw before moving to London where she joined the BBC World Service. During her time with the BBC, she interviewed many well-known names in literature including Mario Vargas Llosa and Günther Grass, as well as politicians such as then Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Çiller.

After leaving the BBC and life in front of a microphone, Elżbieta decided to grab a camera. She now devotes her time to travel and street photography. She has staged numerous exhibitions of her photographic impressions from Ethiopia, Nepal, Laos, Libya and Turkey (Istanbul) in Poland and in London.

Elżbieta is currently settled in London. She says she has two things in common with Queen Elizabeth: a name and the fact that both of them are depicted on stamps! The latter honour came thanks to her being on board the Airbus 380's maiden flight from Singapore to London, after which all passengers were given a gift—limited edition stamps with photographs taken at the event.

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The Digest

Useful information for visitors

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Important numbers

There are only two area codes in Istanbul: 212 for the European side, and 216 for the Asian side.

The Bosphorus Strait is the continental divide which bisects Istanbul into Europe and Asia.

Area codes (where required) are provided for numbers below.

Remember to omit the area code when calling numbers within the same area from which you are calling, and to use the area code when calling a number outside of the area from which you are calling.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS:

Ambulance..... 112

Fire 110

Police 155

Coast Security 158

HELPLINE NUMBERS:

Tourist Police Hotline(212) 527-4505

American Hospital.....(212) 231-2150

OTHER KEY NUMBERS:

Istanbul Police (212) 635-0000

Ataturk Airport (212) 663-6400

Public Transportation(216) 333-3763

Directory Assistance..... 118

International Call Service 115

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Top 10 things to know when planning your trip to Istanbul

1 Istanbul is a popular tourist destination. If you plan to visit during peak holiday seasons or at festival times, make sure you book early to have your pick of the best hotels in your price range. You can choose from five-star luxury hotels, historic restored guest houses, friendly bed and breakfasts, welcoming budget accommodation or flexible self-catering.

2 Find out if you need a visa to enter Turkey. Visitors from countries that can get visas on arrival may purchase them in American dollars or Euros.

3 There are two airports in Istanbul—Atatürk Airport, 25km west of the Sultanahmet, and Sabiha Gökçen Airport in the Asian suburbs. Turkish Airlines flies to a multitude of destinations but check out budget airlines for some of the best deals. The cheapest and fastest routes in to the city are via public transport, which is easy to use for those not carrying large amounts of luggage.

4 Plan to use public transport during your stay. It's safe, convenient and much cheaper than taxis. Make sure you purchase a travel card—the Istanbul Kart can be used on trams, buses and the metro. The

card is available at main metro, tram and bus stops and some newspaper kiosks, and can be refilled with Turkish Lira as many times as you like. More expensive, one-trip tokens can also be bought at automatic machines found at main tram stops and bus interchanges, though you might have to stand in line for a while. For long distances, consider minibus services available at main transport hubs—you'll have the pleasure of sharing your trip with local people, and the service is often quicker and more frequent than a regular bus.

5 Pack walking shoes. You're probably going to be doing a lot of walking in Istanbul so remember to pack sensible walking shoes if you don't want sore feet and aching muscles. Plan your route between landmarks carefully to conserve your energy and be sure to check opening times—some places may be under renovation or have reduced hours depending on the season. A hat and sunscreen will be important items in your suitcase during summer months and an umbrella is a must in late autumn and early spring. Look into buying a Müze museum pass. It may save you money if you plan to visit a number of the top tourist locations.

6 Wear appropriate clothing. When visiting mosques and tombs, make sure you wear appropriate clothing. Women should cover their hair, avoid short-sleeved tops and choose longer skirts. Men should avoid wearing shorts or sleeveless T-shirts. Some

mosques provide scarves and material for men and women to cover bare legs but if you're worried about looking stylish, plan ahead. Remember to take your shoes off before entering any prayer spaces or tombs.

7 Carry coins. There are clean, accessible public conveniences near most major tourist attractions. Carry small change to tip the attendant or operate the automatic barrier and you'll never be caught short.

8 Personal security. As in any busy city, take care of your personal belongings in crowded places and make sure you don't leave anything on the bus, tram or metro or in your taxi. If you're not comfortable doing your own thing, join one of the many organised tours of the city that can be booked at travel agencies.

9 Shopping tips. Part of the fun of Istanbul is the chance to shop in one of the myriad of markets. Keep your budget in mind and enjoy the experience but only bargain if you intend to buy so that no one is disappointed. Hold on to your receipts if you want to claim the tax back at the airport.

10 How to avoid mealtime bother. There are thousands of food places in Istanbul to suit all budgets and tastes. And they're all competing for your custom! Be polite and firm to avoid unwanted bother from restaurant owners touting for your business as meal times approach. If you're looking for something special, ask at your hotel for a recommendation.

How to get a taste of the *real* Istanbul experience

By Sarah Clarke

AFTER a long, very hot, first summer in the Middle East—a summer that never seemed to end—the chance to escape to Istanbul for the weekend was an opportunity too good to miss. That the city was a treasure trove of history, art and culture really didn't enter into the equation; the prospect of a smattering of rain, a few clouds, a chilly breeze and some greenery was what inspired that first visit... oh to be gloriously cool and splash in a puddle!

It was the autumn of 2006 and little did I know that this would be the start of a wonderful relationship

Beyond the tourist attractions, there is a city with soul that is just waiting to be discovered



with a city that never fails to deliver another delightful experience, no matter how many times I visit.

On that first weekend in the Sultanahmet, I woke at dawn to a cacophony of sound from the call for prayer reverberating from mosque to mosque around the city. Not wanting to waste a second, I grabbed my camera and headed out



to an uncharacteristically deserted Sultanahmet, save for a few street cleaners followed by a trail of opportunistic pigeons, and wandered down to the waterfront for my first proper view of the Bosphorus.

Here, with the pale morning sunlight struggling to filter through a blanket of grey clouds, I marvelled at the way numerous

tankers, ferries, cruise liners and fishing boats managed to miss each other in the swell, their paths criss-crossing along invisible watery routes as they ferried their precious cargos of goods and passengers from east to west and north to south. How I wished I had the talent to capture this priceless waterscape on canvas! As the chill

The impressive Sultanahmet Blue Mosque is a favourite with visitors, but Istanbul has much more to offer.

The top 10 things to buy in Istanbul

1 For anyone with a sweet tooth Istanbul is THE place to indulge your cravings for all things sugary. Choose from delicious Turkish delight flavoured with rose water and fruits, pistachio filled baklava oozing with honey, subtle almond fondant and creamy puddings in every flavour imaginable. Ask for your purchase to be wrapped carefully to preserve it for your journey home.

2 Professional and amateur chefs looking for exotic herbs, spices, nuts and dried fruits will be amazed at the array available in Istanbul at the Egyptian Bazaar and other local markets across the city. Herbs and spices can be bought loose by weight or in pre-packed boxes.

3 Whether you prefer coffee or tea, both make excellent gifts. Turkey produces a huge variety of flavoured and herbal teas which are thought to have a wide range of health benefits. Coffee lovers should look for beans from Mehmet Efendi, the country's best known coffee producer.

4 Brightly coloured fabric and textiles are available in shops and markets across the city. Priced from a few Turkish Lira to thousands, there's something to suit every taste and budget. Look for hand woven scarves, delicate embroidery and handmade felt garments.

5 Seemingly at every turn, on every street and in every building across Istanbul, there are amazing ceramics on display. The famed blue and white Iznik style tiles are perhaps the most well-known and make excellent gifts, as do hand painted plates and charming figurines modelled on images from Ottoman times.

continued on opposite page »

crept into my bones and my stomach announced it was time for breakfast, it dawned on me how easy it would be to scurry from famous landmark to famous landmark in this remarkable city and miss out on the delightful bits in between, the breathtaking views, the charming neighbourhoods, the delightful people and the sumptuous cuisine.

So come with me on a tour of some of my favourite “in between” spots—the experiences I think you’ll be glad you didn’t overlook in Istanbul.

- Grab a *simit*—a large pretzel shaped bread, similar in consistency to a bagel—and **sit on the steps of the New Mosque in Eminönü Square** to watch the world go by. I love to observe the spectacle of



The New Mosque in Eminönü Square

hundreds of people scurrying to work, dancing their way around tourists, maddeningly stopping in their way to photograph the square. How they manage to dodge all the street vendors is remarkable!

• **Enjoy a cup of Turkish tea** from a two-tiered teapot at the café terrace in Gülhane Park overlooking the Bosphorus.

The tea pouring ritual is a refreshing alternative to the more familiar Turkish coffee and the view always inspires me. If the weather is poor, take a book to the Literary Museum Library next to the park's entrance—the building's delightful interior and its view of the park lifts my spirits every time.



• **Head to Üsküdar** on the Asian shore of the Bosphorus at sunset and play a game of backgammon



Maiden Tower, Üsküdar

« continued from opposite page

6 For centuries, western Turkey has been a producer of rugs with designs and techniques handed down through the generations. Rugs come in two types—carpets which are knotted and *kilims* which are flat woven with vertical and horizontal threads. Look carefully at the rug for flaws, repairs and marks before agreeing a price on what will be a beautiful addition to any home.

7 Istanbul is often described as the “east meets west” capital of the world and the results of this vibrant cultural melting pot can be seen in art galleries and craft centres throughout the city. Take home a memento of Istanbul in the form of a work of art crafted by a local artisan—ebru work is perhaps the most famous but art enthusiasts will find calligraphy, mother of pearl inlay work, sculptures, felt work, oil and acrylic paintings and much more.

8 It's common in Turkish culture to give a gift of a blue and white “evil eye” bead. They are found adorning shop entrances, car rear view mirrors, handbags, office doors and homes—just about anywhere in fact—and are believed to protect and bring luck to all. The perfect gift for a loved one, and they can be bought just about everywhere in Istanbul.

9 If music be the food of love then Istanbul's residents must be intoxicated all the time by the music that swirls around the city—from jazz to folk and Sufi to classical, there's something to please every ear. Take this cacophony of sound home on a collection of CDs and relive the unique spirit of Istanbul every time you hear the mesmerizing melodies of Turkey.

10 Contrary to popular belief, it's possible to export antiques from Turkey, so long as proper documentation has been obtained permitting the export of items over 100 years old. Hunt for a really unique souvenir in the Çukurcuma district of Istanbul or the Grand Bazaar and check carefully its authenticity. If in doubt, look for replicas as a practical alternative to the real thing.

10 things you can enjoy for free in Istanbul

1 Stroll along the banks of the Bosphorus or the Golden Horn—there'll be something to see, whatever the time of day or night.

2 Drink in the sights, sounds and smells of the Grand Bazaar (Tip 33)—though it'll be hard not to start bargaining for something!

3 Visit the delightful Rüstem Paşa Mosque (Tip 32) and the peaceful Küçük Ayasofya Mosque (Tip 13)—it's quite a walk from one to the other but the route will take you past some of the major tourist spots such as the Blue Mosque (Tip 1), Hippodrome (Tip 3) and Cavalry Bazaar (Tip 11).

4 Walk along a section of the ancient city walls (Tip 76) and imagine what life must have been like at the height of the Byzantine Empire.

5 Go window shopping on İstiklal Street (Tip 51)—your feet won't touch the ground as you'll be swept along by the throng of people all doing the same. If you're lucky you'll hear some street musicians along the way.

6 Stop and chat to a local artisan at one of the many courtyard medresei dotted around the city. They'll be delighted to show you their work and are more than likely

continued on opposite page »

at one of the open air cafés lining the water's edge close to Leander's Tower—the view usually distracts my opponent and the sound of the sea lapping against the rocks gently eases away the stresses of my day.

• **Become a regular at a local pastry shop**

during your stay.

A single piece of baklava—the sweetest, gooiest honey-and-nut filled pastry you're ever likely to taste—and a hot drink is my favourite way to



A variety of Turkish pastries

round off a long day's sightseeing. There are so many different kinds to choose from that I'll have to keep coming back to Istanbul to sample them all. And once I've exhausted the baklava, of course there are the 101 different flavours of Turkish delight to try....

• **Walk, walk and walk some more!** As long as you don't mind a few hills, the best way to see Istanbul is on foot. Though it's hard to choose, three of my favourite



The Golden Horn by night

places, all easily reached by public transport, are: the peaceful tomb-filled, village of Eyüp and neighbouring Pierre Loti Hill with its glorious view of the Golden Horn (truly inspirational); the bustling neighbourhoods around İstiklal Street where I love to temporarily lose my way in the labyrinth of streets and stumble on a delightful café, museum or shop; and finally the lush Emirgan Park, filled with tulips in the Spring—the charming garden of the nearby Sakıp Sabancı Museum has a stunning view of the Bosphorus and is a great place to start a waterfront hike back into Istanbul!

• **People-watch by the fountain in Sultanahmet Square.** If it's festival time there'll be a throng of locals and tourists crowding around stalls selling street food and trinkets. At other times of the year, when I'm feeling a little peckish I'll head to one of the cafés in the courtyard in front of the Cavalry Bazaar—usually there'll be a great mix of locals and tourists enjoying traditional food, Turkish coffee, aromatic shisha and live music. If I want to splash out, the restaurants overlooking this courtyard, though more expensive, offer a captivating view and an enchanting atmosphere,



Sultanahmet Square

« continued from opposite page

to welcome you with a cup of tea or coffee.

7 Enjoy a military band performance on Friday mornings before the call for prayer in Eyüp Square and then stroll through the graveyards all the way to the top of Pierre Loti Hill.

8 Take a sketch pad or watercolours and find a spot looking towards the Galata tower to capture the district of Beyoğlu on canvas. Then walk over Galata Bridge, look back and paint the district of Eminönü on the other side.

9 Hunt for the Kamondo Stairs—one of the most striking pieces of urban architecture in Istanbul. They're



in the Karaköy district and are a little difficult to find in the maze of streets—but that's half the fun!

10 Pack a picnic and head to a park for an afternoon of relaxation in a tranquil setting. Try Gülhane (Tip 22) in the heart of the old city, Yıldız (Tip 66) close to the Dolmabahçe Palace, or Emirgan (Tip 69) further out.

10 things to enjoy with kids in tow

- 1** Visit Istanbul Aquarium (Tip 77)—it's a watery world full of wonder waiting to be discovered!
- 2** Check out the Istanbul Toy Museum (Tip 92) on the Asian shore—puppets, toy cars, dolls houses, teddy bears and more are sure to entertain children of all ages.
- 3** Play hide and seek in Emirgan Park (Tip 69)...remember to take some bird seed to feed the ducks too!
- 4** Fish for your supper off a pier (Tip 99) and if nothing bites, head to the fish market (Tip 46) and munch on a fish sandwich by the sea!
- 5** Ride the nostalgic street car up Istiklal Street (Tip 51) and enjoy an afternoon treat from one of the flamboyant ice cream sellers.
- 6** Explore the battlements of Rumeli Fortress (Tip 71) and imagine you're defending the city from attack!
- 7** Delve into the history of transport and industry at the Rahmi Koç Museum (Tip 45)—the vintage cars, bikes and boats will keep children occupied for hours.
- 8** Hold on to your hat and head for the rollercoaster at Vialand (Tip 38) for the ride of your life!
- 9** Take an art class at Caferağa Medresesi (Tip 20) or the Sakıp Sanancı Museum (Tip 70)—your children will take home a unique souvenir of their visit.
- 10** Join an open top bus tour of Istanbul (Tip 25). Stop off at Pierre Loti Hill for a cable-car ride (Tip 43).

particularly if you're there as the evening call for prayer echoes out from the Blue Mosque.

- **Haggle over the price of a carpet** over a cup of Turkish coffee. Across the ages Istanbul has been a place where traders met to sell their wares and no visit to the city would be complete without a complex



Turkish carpets are prized the world over

negotiation over a souvenir at one of Istanbul's many bazaars. I never fail to have a go, whatever my budget. It's always nice to feel like I've got a bargain—even if I probably haven't. And while I'd really like to bottle Istanbul's vibrant atmosphere to take home with me, I guess a handcrafted object will just have to sustain me until my next visit!

Listening to Istanbul

Hop on for a sensory tour of some hidden gems around the city



By Sebahat Köksal Isık

I used to be surprised by the fact that every time I left Istanbul I found that I still had a growing list of places to see on my next visit! After many trips, I've come to understand that there is much more to Istanbul than that which meets the eye. I've learned that it's not sufficient to gaze hungrily at the sights of Istanbul, rather I must listen to the chatter of the living history around me, just as Orhan Veli Kanik describes in one of his poems about Istanbul.

I am listening to Istanbul, intent, my eyes closed:

At first there is a gentle breeze,

And the leaves on the trees

Softly sway;

Out there, far away,

The bells of water-carriers unceasingly ring;

I am listening to Istanbul, intent, my eyes closed.

So immerse your senses and truly hear the music of the city—a melody

**A break from
the busy city,
beautifully
renovated
classical
houses on the
waterfront.**

that transcends time, moving seamlessly from one century to the next. Around each corner, a new discovery awaits you. Come with me on a sensory tour of some hidden gems around Istanbul.

Take a morning voyage on the municipality's long Bosphorus Tour from Eminönü Port (www.sehirhatlari.com.tr). Stay on board until the Bosphorous Strait comes to an end and the Black Sea begins. Disembark here and you will find yourself in a small, old port called Anadolu Kavağı, tucked away from the hustle and bustle of metropolitan Istanbul. Anadolu Kavağı, where there are numerous seafood restaurants, faces Rumeli Kavagi on the opposite bank of the Bosphorous. A 20 minute walk uphill takes you to Yoros Castle. Time has worn away much of what is left of the castle, but an imposing facade remains that offers a breathtaking view of the Bosphorus, a

silhouette that you won't see anywhere else. On your way to Yoros, I'm sure you'll have noticed a coffee shop neatly placed on the hill as a sanctuary that almost compels you to stop for something to eat with its delicious and alluring aroma.

On your journey up the Bosphorus you'll have undoubtedly spotted Kanlıca Port. This is another beautiful small town on the Bosphorous with the best yoghurt—it has a famous custard sugar topping and is simply scrumptious! You'll find a coffee shop at the port among the old Bosphorous palaces, known in Turkish as *yahı*. Pause a while and if

you listen hard you can almost hear the voices of those who lived in these masterful houses built during Ottoman times under centuries old plane (*çınar*) trees.

Listening to Istanbul mosques is another exciting journey, for each and every mosque has an important place in history. For example, there are two Mihrimah Sultan mosques; one is in Üsküdar, the other in Edirnekapı. Mihrimah (meaning sun

Time has worn away much of what is left of Yoros Castle, but an imposing facade remains that offers a breathtaking view of the Bosphorus.

and moon) was the daughter of Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent. When she reached 17 years of age, Sultan Süleyman ordered a mosque to be built in her name by the great architect Mimar Sinan.

At the time, Sinan was around 50 years old and, though married, was enchanted with the Princess. First, he built the , which gives the impression of a woman with long flowing hair reaching down her back. Later he built another

mosque in Edirnekapı, which is similar to the one in Üsküdar but smaller and called Mihrimah mosque.

But that is not where the story ends. There is a unique feature to this pair of mosques that is not an accident, but the genius of superb planning—the sun rises behind the minaret of Edirnekapı while the moon rises behind that of the mosque in Üsküdar. The sun and the moon—Mihrimah.... What a love story! What devotion to his unrequited love. And what mastery of his profession!

But if we reminisce about Ottoman times, we



would be remiss not to mention the famous Ottoman cuisine of Istanbul—the only place in the world where you can really enjoy authentic Ottoman style dishes. I recommend Asitane (tel: 0212 534 8414; asitanerestaurant.com) close to the Church of St Saviour Chora (Tip 79) where you can taste Ottoman Palace cuisine. Truly the food of Sultans!

Yoros Castle in Anadolu Kavayı, the last stop on the Asian side of the Bosphorus Strait.

Even breakfast can be turned into an unforgettable experience if you choose the right place. Try Sütüş in Emirgan (tel: 0212 323 5030; www.sutis.com.tr). This restaurant is on the banks of the Bosphorus. Everything brought to your table will be fresh and delicious and I guarantee that you'll start to lose count of the number of teas served.

And after breakfast, why not take a pleasant stroll along the waterfront where fishermen try their luck? But before you plan your trip to Emirgan, make sure the Sakıp Sabancı museum (Tip 70) is open, because it's right next door. A visit to this beautiful museum, converted from a family mansion in 2002, will complete your day perfectly. There is a delightful garden in which, if the season is right, you can enjoy 452 different types of trees and flowers and listen to the wind rustling the leaves.

Of course after you've seen the museum and its gardens you can always stop for a cup of coffee in Müzedechanga inside the museum, another place that offers a chance to listen to both the old and new sounds of Istanbul!

Turkish for tourists

By Özlem Vural

Turkish is a phonetic language. Each letter has one and only one sound, and each letter is pronounced distinctly. So it's easy to learn to pronounce Turkish words just by following a few basic rules.

A,a is short, as in “art” or “star”

E,e is also short, as in “send” or “tell”

İ,i [dotted i] is pronounced like the vowel sound in “see”

I,ı [undotted i] is pronounced like the vowel sound in “nation.”

O,o is long, as in “phone”

Ü,ü and **Ö,ö** are pronounced as in German

Ç,ç and **Ş,ş** are pronounced like the English “ch” and “sh.”

C,c is the equivalent to the English J,j, while the Turkish J,j is like the French

G,g is hard, as in “go”

Ğ,ğ [with the accent] slightly lengthens the sound of adjacent vowels, but for tourist purposes, just think of it as silent.

Useful words and phrases

LOKANTADA	At a restaurant
Bakar mısınız?	<i>(To get the waiter's or anyone's attention)</i>
Menü lütfen	<i>May I see the menu?</i>
Bir döner ve bir ayran istiyorum	<i>I'd like a döner and an ayran</i>
Evet, lütfen	<i>Yes, please</i>
Hayır, teşekkürler	<i>No, thank you</i>
Teşekkür ederim	<i>Thank you</i>
Hesap lütfen	<i>Check please!</i>
Kredi kartı geçiyor mu?	<i>Do you accept credit cards?</i>
Fatura / fiş istiyorum	<i>May I have an invoice/receipt?</i>
İyi günler!	<i>Have a nice day!</i>
Tuvalet nerede?	<i>Where is the restroom?</i>

OTELDE	At a hotel
Merhaba. Ben David Thomson	<i>Hello, I'm David Thomson</i>
Kahvaltı nerede?	<i>Where is the breakfast room?</i>
Anahtarımı kaybettim	<i>I lost my key</i>
Odamı temizleyebilir misiniz?	<i>Can you clean my room, please?</i>
Asansör nerede?	<i>Where is the elevator?</i>
Hangi kat?	<i>Which floor?</i>
Kapıyı açabilir misiniz?	<i>Can you open the door?</i>
Çantam burada	<i>My suitcase is here</i>
Hangi anahtar benim?	<i>Which key is mine?</i>

TAKSİDE		In a taxi
Boş mu?		<i>Is this taxi available?</i>
Sultanahmet lütfen		<i>To Sultanahmet please</i>
Sağ lütfen		<i>Please take a left</i>
Sol lütfen		<i>Please take a right</i>
Düz lütfen		<i>Please go straight</i>
Burada durun		<i>Please stop here</i>
Ne kadar?		<i>What is the cost?</i>
Bozuk var mı?		<i>Do you have change?</i>

MÜZEDE		At a museum
Nereden bilet alabilirim?		<i>Where can I get a ticket?</i>
Bir kişi ne kadar?		<i>What is the cost per person?</i>
Bugün müze açık mı?		<i>Is the museum open today?</i>
Müze saat kaçta kapanıyor?		<i>How late is the museum open?</i>

KAFEDE		At a cafe
Çay var mı?		<i>Do you have tea?</i>
Sütlü kahve/sade kahve lütfen		<i>May I have coffee with milk/black coffee?</i>
Baklava istiyorum		<i>May I have an order of baklava?</i>
Bir şekerli Türk kahvesi lütfen		<i>May I have a sweetened Turkish coffee?</i>

SOKAKTA		On the street
İngilizce biliyor musunuz?		<i>Do you know English?</i>
Türkçe bilmiyorum		<i>I don't speak Turkish</i>
Taksim'e nasıl gidebilirim?		<i>How can I get to Taksim?</i>
Metro nerede?		<i>Where is the subway?</i>
Pardon, burası Galata mı?		<i>Excuse me, am I in Galata?</i>
Anlamıyorum		<i>I don't understand</i>

MAĞAZADA		In a store
Pardon, yardım edebilir misiniz?		<i>Excuse me, can you help me?</i>
Bu pantolon ne kadar?		<i>How much are these pants?</i>
38 beden var mı?		<i>Do you have size 38?</i>
Mavi renk istiyorum		<i>I would like it in blue</i>
Kabin nerede?		<i>Where is the changing room?</i>
Deneyebilir miyim?		<i>Can I try it on?</i>
Bunu alıyorum		<i>I'll take this</i>
Kasa nerede?		<i>Where is the cash register?</i>

Numbers in Turkish

Read the "Turkish for tourists" article alongside before attempting to pronounce these words.

Numbers	SAYILAR
0	sıfır
1	bir
2	iki
3	üç
4	dört
5	beş
6	altı
7	yedi
8	sekiz
9	dokuz
10	on
11	on bir*
12	on iki*
20	yirmi
25	yirmi beş*
30	otuz
40	kırk
50	elli
60	altmış
70	yetmiş
80	seksen
90	doksan
100	yüz
200	iki yüz*
1000	bin
2,000	iki bin
3,000	üç bin
1,000,000	milyon

* These demonstrate how number combinations are made



Özlem Vural offers professional, on-site Turkish language instruction to foreigners in the greater Istanbul area. Her private or group courses are designed around clients' particular needs for the language and are available at all proficiency levels. For more information, visit www.ozlemvural.com.

Foreign diplomatic missions

All foreign embassies are located in Turkish capital Ankara, but many countries also have a consulate in Istanbul.

Albania:

Valikonagi Cad. Ekmek Fabrikasi Sok. No:4,
Nisantasi.

Tel: (212) 2962428

Algeria

Suleyman Seba Cad. No:124, Besiktas.

Tel: (212) 3278980

Australia

Tepecikyolu No: 58, Etiler.

Tel: (212) 2577050

Austria

Köybasi Cad. No: 46, Yeniköy.

Tel: (212) 2629315

Azerbaijan

Alt Zeren Sok. No:13, 1.Levent.

Tel: (212) 2795400

Bangladesh

Buyukdere Cad. No:38, Mecidiyekoy.

Tel: (212) 3155200

Belgium:

Siraselviler cad. No:73, Taksim.

Tel: (212) 2433300

Bosnia Herzegovina

Beyaz Karanfil Sok. No:45, 3.Levent.

Tel: (212) 2451616

Brazil

Bankalar Cad. No:31-33, Karakoy

Tel: (212) 2934227

Bulgaria

Adnan Saygun Cad. 44, Ulus.

Tel: (212) 2690478

Canada

İstiklal Cad. No:373-5, Beyoglu

Tel: (212) 2519838

China

Memduhpasa Yalisi Kirecburnu Mah. Misirli
Cad, Tarabya.

Tel: (212) 2992631

Colombia

Birlik Sok. Manolya Apt. No:3/3, 1.Levent.

Tel: (212) 2799828

Costa Rica

Tahmis Kalcin sk. No:15, Eminonu.

Tel: (212) 5286819

Croatia

Mesrutiyet Cad. No:163, Tepebasi.

Tel: (212) 2935467

Czech Republic

Abdi Ipekci Cad. No:71, Macka.

Tel: (212) 2309597

Denmark

Meygede Sok. No:2, Bebek.

Tel: (212) 3591900

Ecuador

Seher Yildizi Sok. No:33/12, Etiler.

Tel: (212) 2574788

Egypt

Cevdet Pasa Cad. No:173, Bebek.

Tel: (212) 2636038

Estonia

Cumhuriyet Cad. No:22-24, Elmadag.

Tel: (212) 3157071

Ethiopia

Nuri Pasa Cad. No:84, Tarabya.

Tel: (212) 2991120

Finland

Yeni Camlik Cad. Ayaz sok. No.5, 4.Levent.

Tel: (212) 2835737

France

İstiklal cad. No:8, Taksim.

Tel: (212) 2431852

Georgia

Inonu Cad. No:55 Marmara Apt. D.2,

Gumussuyu-Taksim.

Tel: (212) 2928111

Germany

Inönü Cad. 14-16, Taksim.

Tel: (212) 3346100

Ghana

Polaris Plaza Kat:11 Ahi Evran Cad. No:1,
Maslak.

Tel: (212) 3460112

Greece

Turnaci Basi Sok. No:32, Beyoglu.

Tel: (212) 2450596

Guinea

Poyraz Sok. Sadikoglu Plaza 1.Kat No:3/69,
Kadıköy.

Tel: (216) 5509401

Hungary

Poyrazcik Sok. No:35, Tesvikiye

Tel: (212) 2255514

Iceland

Okul Yolu No:9, Orhanli.

Tel: (216) 3943210

India

Cumhuriyet Cad. No:18 Dörtler Apt, Harbiye.

Tel: (212) 2962131

Indonesia

Seher Yıldızı Sok. No:22/11, Etiler.

Tel: (212) 2870008

Iran

Ankara Cad. No:1-2, Cagaloglu.

Tel: (212) 5138230

Ireland

Cumhuriyet cad. No:26/A, Harbiye

Tel: (212) 2466025

Israel

Büyükdere Cad. Yapi Kredi Plaza C Blok
7.Kat, 4.Levent.

Tel: (212) 3176500

Italy

Bogazkesen Cad. Tomtom Kaptan Sok. 15,
Tophane-Beyoglu.

Tel: (212) 2431024

Jamaica

Altan Erbulak Sok. Eken Apt. No:6/3,
Mecidiyekoy.

Tel: (212) 2886351

Japan

Inönü Cad. No:24, Gumussuyu-Taksim.

Tel: (212) 3932010

Jordan

Buyukdere Cad. Lalezar Ishani No:101 Kat.2,
Mecidiyekoy.

Tel: (212) 2747543

Kazakhstan

Florya Cad. No:62, Yesilkoy

Tel: (212) 6625347

Kyrgyzia

Lamartin Cad. No:7 Altinay Apt. Kat:2,
Taksim.

Tel: (212) 2353737

101 THINGS TO SEE & DO | useful info

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Korea, Republic

Tersane Cad. Bakir Sok. No:19, Karakoy.

Tel: (212) 2564970

Lebanon

Tesvikiye Cad. 134/1, Tesvikiye.

Tel: (212) 2361365

Libya

Miralay Sefik Bey Sok. No:5,

Gümüssuyu-Taksim.

Tel: (212) 2518100

Lithuania

Cavusbasi Cad. No:33, Kavacik-Beykoz.

Tel: (216)4250500

Macedonia

Inonu Cad. No:20/3,

Gumussuyu-Taksim.

Tel: (212) 2499977

Malaysia

Halaskargazi Cad. No:266 D.7, Sisli.

Tel: (212) 2471728

Malta

Aydede Cad. No 16/11 Taksim.

Tel: (212) 3111212

Mexico

Tesvikiye. Cad. Tesvikiye. Palas No:107/2,
Nisantasi.

Tel: (212) 2273500

Monaco

Koybasi Arkasi Sok. No:4 Park Apt. D.2,
Yenikoy.

Tel: (212) 2624148

Nepal

Valikonagi Cad. Y.K.Bank Ishani Kat:4,
Nisantasi.

Tel: (212) 2466104

New Zealand

Inonu Caddesi No:48/3, Taksim.

Tel: (212)2440272

Netherlands

İstiklal Cad. No:393, Beyoglu.

Tel: (212) 2515030

Norway

Bilezik Sok. No:2, Findikli-Kabatas

Tel: (212) 2499753

Oman

Cumhuriyet Cad. No:157/4, Harbiye-Sisli.

Tel: (212) 2308384

Pakistan

Nispetiye Cad. Gulsen Sok. No:3, Etiler.

Tel: (212) 3584506

Peru

Tekstil Kent Koza Plaza A Blok Kat:22 D:83,
Esenler.

Tel: (212) 4382777

Philippines

Cumhuriyet Cad. Ak Is Merkezi No:1 Kat:5-6,
Kavacik-Beykoz.

Tel: (216) 3314344

Poland

Büyük Çiftlik sk. Yücel apt. No:5-7, Nisantasi.

Tel: (212) 2910300

Portugal

Muradiye Cad. No:49/5, Sirkeci.

Tel: (212) 2519118

Romania

Siraselviler Cad. No:95, Taksim.

Tel: (212) 2453555

Russia

İstiklal Cad. No:443 Beyoglu.

Tel: (212) 2441693

Saudi Arabia

Camlik Cad. Akasyali Sok. No:6, 4.Levent.

Tel: (212) 2819140

Serbia and Montenegro

Valikonagi Cad. No:96/A, Nisantasi.

Tel: (212) 2481004

Singapore

Kazim Özalp Sok. Ethem Bey Apt. Kat:3,
Saskinbakkal.

Tel: (212) 3580133

Slovenia

Haci Resit Pasa Sok. No:7, Camlica.

Tel: (216) 3219000

South Africa

Alarko Holding Muallim Naci Cad. No:113-
115, Ortakoy.

Tel: (212) 2275200

Spain

Karanfil Araligi Sok. No:16, 1.Levent.

Tel: (212) 2707410

Sri Lanka

Abdi Ipekci Cad. No.33, Tesvikiye.

Tel: (212) 2324700

Sudan

Etiler. Sok. No:1, Etiler.

Tel: (212) 2876850

Sweden

İstiklal Cad. No:497, Tünel-Beyoglu.

Tel: (212) 2435770

Switzerland

Büyükdere Cad. No:173 Levent Plaza A Blok
3.Kat, Levent.

Tel: (212) 2831282

Syria

Silահhane Cad. Ralli Apt. No:59-5, Tesvikiye.

Tel: (212) 2327110

Thailand

Inonu Caddesi No:90 Dersan Han,
Gumussuyu-Taksim.

Tel: (212) 2928651

Togo

Mesut Baban Sit. No:68 A Blok D.20,
Altunizade.

Tel: (216) 3427821

Tunisia

Mesrutiyet Cad. No:99/1 Tarhan Han,
Tepebasi. **Tel:** (212) 2939578

Turkmenistan

Gazi Evranos Cad. Baharistan Sok. No:13,
Yesilkoy.

Tel: (212) 6620221

Ukraine

Adakale Sok. No:13, Senlikkoy-Florya.

Tel: (212) 6622541

United Arab Emirates

Altzeren Sok. No:7, 1.Levent.

Tel: (212) 2796348

United Kingdom

Mesrutiyet Cad. No:34, Tepebasi.

Tel: (212) 3346400

United States

Kaplicalar Mevkii Sok. No.2, Istinye.

Tel: (212) 3359000

Uruguay

Zeytinoglu Cad. Yeserti Sok. Hayat Apt.
1B/15, Etiler.

Tel: (212) 3521067

Uzbekistan

Meclisi Mebusan Sok. Mebusan Yokusu
No:61, Kabatas.

Tel: (212) 2934743

Vietnam

Itri Sok. No:3/1, Balmumcu-Besiktas.

Tel: (212) 2746908

Yemen

Halaskargazi Cad. No.107/2, Harbiye.

Tel: (212) 2312705

Istanbul fast facts

History: Istanbul has been capital of the Roman Empire, the Byzantine Empire, the Latin Empire, and the Ottoman Empire, yet it isn't the capital city of modern Turkey, which is Ankara.

Currency: Local currency is the (new) Turkish lira, or YTL. Introduced in 2005 after the country tamed high inflation with IMF help, YTL banknotes come in denominations of 5, 10, 20, 50, and 100.

ATMs and cash exchange: Cashpoints are common. Most machines will accept cards linked into the Cirrus or Plus networks, and supply Turkish lira or cash advances on major credit cards. Many shops and restaurants accept payment in US dollars, sterling or euros, but there are dozens of exchange bureaux (döviz bürosu) in the main tourist and shopping districts.

Tippling: Although not obligatory, the rule of thumb is to leave about ten per cent of the bill at restaurants.

Electricity: Electricity in Turkey runs on 220 volts. Plugs have two round pins. Adaptors for UK appliances are readily available at hardware shops and electricians. Transformers are required for US 110-volt appliances.

Internet: Internet cafés are plentiful, and particularly around Sultanahmet, you'll find most hotels offer Internet access. Wi-fi access is available in most upscale cafés and restaurants. Internet access kits are sold at most large music/media and computer shops. Try Superonline (212-473-7475/www.superonline.com) or Turknet (212-444-0077/www.turk.net).

English-language media: The only daily English newspaper is the *Turkish Daily News*. Foreign newspapers and magazines are easy to find, but rarely arrive before late afternoon. The best places to look are the news stands in Sultanahmet and around Taksim Square.

Time difference

**Standard time. Clocks move 1 hour ahead in summer when daylight saving time takes effect.*

COUNTRY	Time diff. (in hrs.)
Australia	+5 (W. Aus) +7 (NSW)
Austria	-2
Bahrain	0
Brazil	-6
Canada	-8 (Eastern) -11 (Pacific)
Denmark	-2
Egypt	-1
Finland	-2
France	-2
Germany	-2
India	+2.5
Iran	+0.5
Italy	-2
Japan	+6
Jordan	-1
Kuwait	0
Netherlands	-2
New Zealand	+9
Oman	+1
Qatar	0
Russia (Moscow)	+1
Saudi Arabia	0
Singapore	+5
South Africa	-1
South Korea	+6
Spain	-2
United States	-8 (Eastern) -11 (Pacific)

THANK YOU

We welcome your feedback

We hope you have enjoyed exploring all the wonderful ways you can enjoy what Istanbul has to offer. We welcome you to write in with your own visitor experiences and tips. The best suggestions will be acknowledged and published in a future edition of this book.

Please email your comments to us via the Contact form on our website:

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A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER



GROUP FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE

The Florence Nightingale Group of Hospital is inspired by the life and work of the celebrated English nurse, writer and statistician, Florence Nightingale. She came to prominence for her pioneering work in nursing during the Crimean War, where she tended to wounded soldiers. She was dubbed "The Lady with the Lamp" after her habit of making rounds at night. Nightingale arrived in Istanbul in 1854, and became famous for her work at Istanbul hospital in the present-day district of Uskudar (Scutari)

Inspiring Our Approach

Nightingale laid the foundation of professional nursing with the establishment, in 1860, of her nursing school at St Thomas Hospital in London, the first secular nursing school in the world, now part of King's College London. The Nightingale Pledge taken by new nurses was named in her honor, and the annual International Nurses Day is celebrated around the world on her birthday. This pioneering spirit continues to inspire the current day work of the Group Florence Nightingale in Istanbul, delivering care and treatment to patients from around the world in its hospital and medical centers in central Istanbul, and training the physicians and nurses of the future at its Istanbul Bilim University.

Group
Florence Nightingale
Istanbul Hospitals



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