

CASA  
FOSCOLO  
1890

# City Guide Istanbul



City  
Guide  
Istanbul

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# Pera & Beyoğlu

Pera, meaning "the other side" in Greek, was the settlement across the Golden Horn that evolved into present-day Beyoğlu. Once a trading hub influenced by Genoese and Venetian merchants, Pera flourished beyond Galata's walls during the Byzantine era. By the 19th century, it transformed into a European-style district with embassies, entertainment venues, and commerce, shaping Istanbul's modern identity. During the Republic era, Beyoğlu became the district's official name, while Pera remained a symbol of its rich cultural and architectural heritage.





# Istanbul

Istanbul, founded in 667 BC as Byzantium, was named after King Byzas of Megara. It evolved through names like Byzantium, Nova Roma, and Constantinople, serving as the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire until its conquest by the Ottomans in 1453. The name "Istanbul," derived from the Greek phrase "eis tin polin" ("to the city"), became widely used over time. With over 2,500 years of history, this historic metropolis has been the capital of three empires. Istanbul remains a living museum, showcasing cultural, scientific, and architectural treasures from Greek, Roman, Latin, and Turkish civilizations.

# Historical structures & Natural beauties



## Taksim Square

Taksim Square is the vibrant heart of Istanbul, combining modernity with rich history. Serving as the starting point of Istiklal Avenue, it offers a gateway into the city's cultural and social life, highlighted by landmarks like the Republic Monument and bustling cafes. Historically, it functioned as a water distribution center during the Ottoman era, with its name derived from "Taksim," meaning sharing. Today, it remains a lively meeting point and a symbol of Istanbul's dynamic spirit.



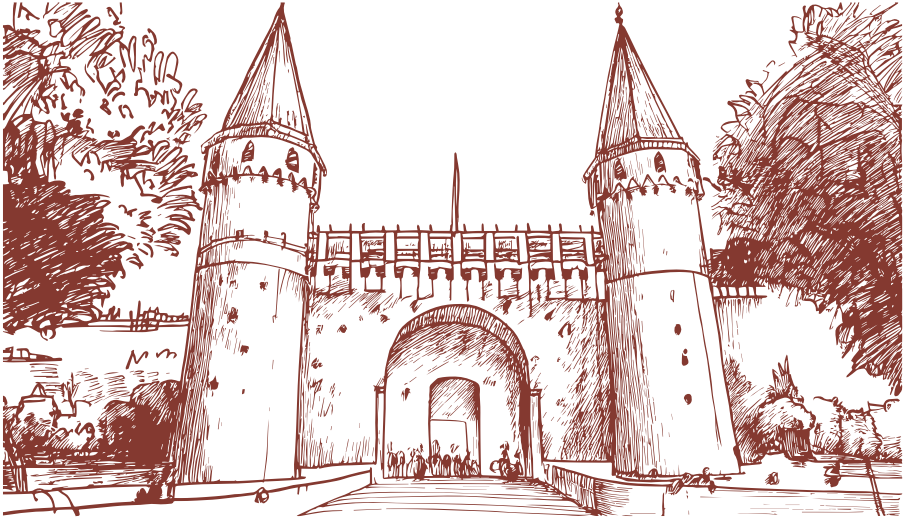
## Hagia Sophia Mosque

Hagia Sophia, meaning "Holy Wisdom," is one of history's most iconic structures. Initially built by Emperor Constantius II and later reconstructed by Justinian I after the Nika Revolt, it became a symbol of grandeur, designed by Isidore of Miletus and Anthemius of Tralles. Plundered during the 1204 European invasion, it was later restored but never fully regained its glory. Converted into a mosque after the Ottoman conquest in 1453, it became a museum in 1934 and was reconverted into a mosque in 2020, remaining a testament to Istanbul's rich and layered history.



## Sultanahmed Mosque

The Sultanahmed Mosque, or Blue Mosque, built between 1609 and 1617 by Sedefkar Mehmed Agha under Sultan Ahmed I, is a masterpiece of Ottoman and Byzantine architectural fusion. Constructed atop the former Hippodrome, it includes additional structures like a madrasa, soup kitchen, and tomb. Notable for its six minarets, a rarity in Islamic tradition, the mosque's interior showcases stunning İznik tiles, marble carvings, and calligraphy by Seyid Kasim Gubari. This architectural gem stands as a symbol of Ottoman grandeur and artistic excellence.

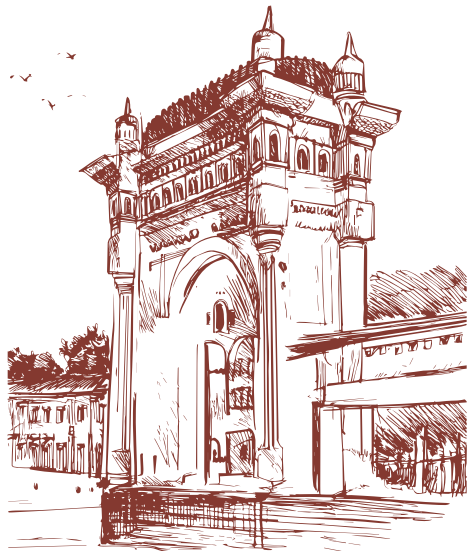


## Topkapı Palace

Topkapı Palace, built by Fatih Sultan Mehmet after the conquest of Istanbul, served as the Ottoman dynasty's administrative center and residence for 380 years. Completed in 1478 on the site of the Byzantine Great Palace, it expanded over time, showcasing various architectural styles. Divided into four main sections -Birun (service area), Enderun (educational area), Divan-ı Hümayun (administrative center), and the Harem- the palace houses treasures like the Spoonmaker's Diamond and Topkapı Dagger. Converted into a museum in 1924 by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, it is Turkey's oldest museum and a lasting symbol of Ottoman heritage.

## Grand Bazaar

The Grand Bazaar, the world's largest and oldest active marketplace, was established in 1460 by Fatih Sultan Mehmet to serve as a new trade and shopping center after the Conquest of Istanbul. Expanded over 250 years, it became a hub of commerce and culture. Significantly damaged in the 1894 earthquake, it was restored over four years during Sultan Abdulhamid's reign, achieving its current form. Today, it stands as a testament to Istanbul's rich trading history.



## Dolmabahçe Palace

Dolmabahçe Palace, built in 1856 by Sultan Abdülmejid, embodies the Ottoman Empire's embrace of Western influences, blending Baroque, Rococo, Neoclassical, and Ottoman styles. With 285 rooms and 46 halls, including the Blue Hall with its massive crystal chandelier and the grand Muayede Hall, it served as the empire's administrative center. Renowned for its gilded interiors and a stunning seaside façade along the Bosphorus, the palace symbolizes the grandeur of the Ottoman Empire's final era. It is also where Mustafa Kemal Atatürk spent his last days, passing away there on November 10, 1938.

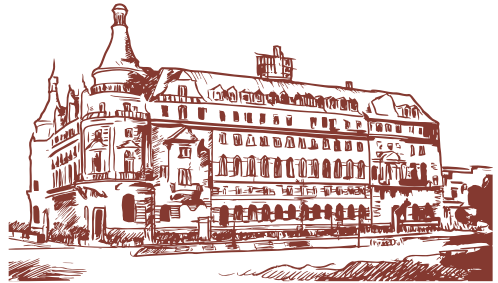


## The Bosphorus

The Bosphorus, a natural waterway linking the Black Sea to the Mediterranean, separates Europe and Asia while serving as a cultural and logistical bridge. Central to Istanbul's unique position spanning two continents, it captivates with its majestic beauty. Connecting its shores are the Democracy Bridge (1973), Fatih Sultan Mehmet Bridge (1988), and Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge (2016), alongside the Eurasia Tunnel, an underwater passage between Fatih and Üsküdar. These crossings underscore the Bosphorus's enduring significance in uniting continents and cultures.

## Kadıköy

Kadıköy, on Istanbul's Asian side, is a vibrant district combining deep historical roots with modern urban life. Known for its bustling markets, landmarks like Haydarpaşa Railway Station and Süreyya Opera House, and lively streets, it offers a rich mix of shopping, dining, and entertainment. Legends connect Kadıköy to its ancient founding as Chalcedon, the "City of the Blind," established before Byzantium. Once a fishing village, it has transformed into a cultural and commercial hub, boasting picturesque seaside views, dynamic nightlife, and a rich historical heritage.



## Galata Tower

Galata Tower, built in 528 by Byzantine Emperor Justinianus and rebuilt by the Genoese in 1348, is a Romanesque architectural icon standing 67 meters tall. Once a fire watchtower during the Ottoman era, it is linked to the legend of Hezarfen Ahmet Çelebi, who is said to have flown from its peak. Now a museum and tourist hotspot, the tower offers breathtaking views of the Bosphorus, Golden Horn, and historic peninsula. Surrounded by the vibrant streets of Galata and Karaköy, it combines Istanbul's rich history with its lively modern culture.



## Maiden's Tower

The Maiden's Tower, situated on a small islet in the Bosphorus, dates back to the 5th century BC and has served as a defense tower, lighthouse, and quarantine station. Its stone and wood architecture and unique location between Europe and Asia make it a striking Istanbul landmark. Legends like the love story between the Maiden's Tower and Galata Tower and the tragic tale of Leandros and Hero enhance its cultural mystique. With its romantic charm and historical significance, the Maiden's Tower remains a source of inspiration in Turkish mythology and literature.



## Princes' Islands

The Princes' Islands (Adalar) in the Sea of Marmara consist of nine small islands, four open to the public, offering a peaceful escape from Istanbul's bustling pace. Famous for their historic wooden mansions, pine forests, and car-free streets, they are perfect for exploring by bike or on foot. Once used as places of exile during Byzantine times, with legends like Empress Eirene finding solace in their beauty, the islands now serve as a cherished retreat. They blend historical charm with tranquil natural landscapes, making them a beloved getaway.

## Asmalı Mescit

Asmalı Mescit, a historic district in Beyoğlu named after a small Ottoman-era mosque, is a hub for artists, writers, and tourists. Its cobblestone streets and historic buildings blend Art Nouveau and Ottoman architectural styles, reflecting Istanbul's rich cultural heritage and 19th-century cosmopolitan spirit. Now bustling with life, Asmalı Mescit is home to vibrant restaurants, cafes, and art galleries. A stroll through its lively streets provides an immersive experience of Istanbul's historic charm and modern culture.



## Istiklal Avenue

Istiklal Avenue, Istanbul's iconic street in Beyoğlu, has been a cultural and commercial center since the late Ottoman era. Spanning 1.4 kilometers, it is lined with historic 19th-century buildings, shops, cafes, and art galleries, showcasing a blend of rich history and vibrant modern life. A stroll along the avenue, accompanied by the nostalgic tram, reveals churches, street performers, and the aroma of roasted chestnuts. Bustling by day and lively at night, Istiklal Avenue embodies Istanbul's dynamic energy and layered history.

## Tünel

Tünel, the world's second-oldest underground metro, opened in 1875, spans 573 meters between Karaköy and Tünel Square at the end of İstiklal Avenue. Featuring wooden carriages and historic stations, it offers a nostalgic journey through Istanbul's transportation history. Still in operation, Tünel serves as both a transit option and a tourist attraction. A short ride on this historic line, paired with exploring the lively streets of Karaköy and Galata, showcases Istanbul's unique fusion of modernity and tradition.

## Karaköy

Karaköy, at the end of the Galata Bridge, is a vibrant district where history meets modernity. Once the Ottoman Empire's trade hub, it now hosts historic synagogues, churches, and hammams alongside contemporary art galleries, cafes, and boutique shops. With picturesque Bosphorus views from Karaköy Port and streets adorned with street art, the district offers a unique blend of old and new. Recently revitalized, Karaköy has become a dynamic gathering spot for locals and tourists, preserving its historical charm while embracing modern urban life.



# Being “Istanbullu”



Istanbul, even for its residents, holds hidden treasures waiting to be discovered. Visitors, even on a short trip, can uncover places and experiences that many locals may have missed. Immersing yourself in the city's vibrant flow, from its bustling streets to tranquil shaded corners, offers a chance to connect with its essence—perhaps through something as simple as petting a friendly cat and feeling a rare peace amidst the chaos.

With our suggested routes, you can transform your visit to Istanbul into a soul-nourishing journey.

● **Nearby Route**

Istanbul generally has a historical texture designed for walking. With its narrow streets, steep slopes, and sharp turns, it offers a great opportunity to get lost within it. On this route, you will start from Casa Foscolo and discover Pera, Beyoğlu, Cihangir, Galata, Istiklal, and Taksim.

**1- Pera Museum:** A former 1893 hotel, now a museum showcasing Ottoman artifacts and contemporary art, including the Osman Hamdi Bey exhibition.

**2- Pera Palace Hotel:** Opened in 1892, it hosted notable figures like Atatürk and Agatha Christie, who reportedly wrote *Murder on the Orient Express* here.

**3- Meşrutiyet Avenue:** A quieter alternative to Istiklal, lined with historical buildings, art galleries, and cozy cafes.

**4- Asmalı Mescit:** Known for its art galleries, restaurants, and bars, it's a hub for Istanbul's vibrant nightlife.

**5- Taksim Square:** The bustling heart of Istanbul, home to the Atatürk Monument and a symbol of the city's dynamic nature.

**5.1- Taksim Republic Monument:** Built in 1928, it celebrates the founding of the Republic and features Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.

**6- Gezi Park:** A green space near Taksim Square where street artists often showcase their work.

**7- Atatürk Cultural Center (AKM):** A modern cultural venue hosting theater, opera, and concerts in Taksim Square.

**8- Istiklal Avenue:** A lively street with historical landmarks, shops, theaters, and street food, ideal for a full-day visit.

**9- Çiçek Pasajı:** A historic passage in Beyoğlu, now home to restaurants, taverns, and florists.

**10- Saint Antoine Church:** A Neo-Gothic Catholic church on Istiklal Avenue, attracting thousands of visitors annually.

**11- Galatasaray Square:** A cultural hub on Istiklal Avenue, hosting celebrations and the historic Galatasaray High School.

**12- Galatasaray High School:** Established in 1481, it's one of Turkey's most prestigious educational institutions.

**13- Galatasaray Hamam (Bathhouse):** An Ottoman-era bathhouse from 1481, still in use today.

**14- French Street (Cezayir Street):** A charming cobblestone street with cafes, restaurants, and art galleries exuding French culture.

**15- Tünel Square:** The endpoint of Istiklal Avenue, featuring the world's second-oldest metro line, opened in 1875.

**16- Tünel Passage:** Before descending into the Tunnel metro, you can see this historical passage. From here, you can pass to Asmalı Mescit and Karaköy.

**17- Galip Dede Street and Yüksek Kaldırım:** Known for its music shops, antiques, art galleries, and the Galata Mevlevi Lodge.

**18- Galata Mevlevi House:** Founded in 1491, this lodge is the oldest Mevlevi lodge in Istanbul. It now serves as a museum.

**19- Galata Tower:** A 14th-century Genoese tower offering panoramic views of Istanbul.

**20- Kamondo Stairs:** Iconic 19th-century spiral stairs in Galata, popular for photography.



### ● Middle Route

This route we have prepared for you is the coastal route. While the Bosphorus accompanies you in all its beauty, you can experience Istanbul's purple hue, historical heritage, and cultural life. We ended our previous route in Karaköy. We start this route again from Karaköy and end it in Ortaköy.

**1- Salt Galata:** Located on Karaköy Bankalar Street, this cultural center features art exhibitions, film screenings, seminars, and a rich library and archive.

**2- Arap Mosque:** One of Istanbul's oldest mosques, originally a Byzantine church, known for its simple architecture and popularity among Karaköy tradesmen.

**3- Kemankeş Kara Mustafa Pasha Mosque:** A 17th-century Ottoman mosque in Karaköy, ideal for exploring the area's historical streets.

**4- Mixer:** A dynamic art gallery in Karaköy showcasing young artists through exhibitions, workshops, and talks.

**5- İstanbul Modern:** A prominent art museum in Karaköy hosting modern and contemporary art exhibitions.

**6- Galataport:** A newly opened waterfront destination with shopping, dining, and art galleries on the Karaköy coast.

**7- Kılıç Ali Pasha Mosque and Complex:** Designed by Mimar Sinan, this Ottoman complex includes a mosque, bathhouse, and other structures near the seafront.

**8- Tophane Clock Tower:** A historic Ottoman-era clock tower next to Kılıç Ali Pasha Mosque, adorning the surrounding square.

**9- Fındıklı Park:** A coastal park with sea-facing benches and sculptures, ideal for resting while walking between Tophane and Fındıklı.

**10- Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University:** One of Turkey's oldest art schools, offering a cultural atmosphere near Fındıklı Park.

**11- Kabataş Pier:** A major transportation hub providing ferry access to districts like Üsküdar and Kadıköy.

**12- Dolmabahçe Mosque:** A 19th-century architectural masterpiece blending Baroque, Rococo, and Neoclassical styles, famous for its opulence and historical significance.

**13- Dolmabahçe Palace:** Adjacent to the palace, this elegant mosque offers stunning views of the Bosphorus and intricate interior details.

**14- Beşiktaş Stadium:** A modern sports complex near Dolmabahçe, hosting football matches, concerts, and events with views of the Bosphorus.

**15- Beşiktaş Center:** A lively district known for its markets, breakfast spots, and cultural energy, offering a unique urban experience.

**16- Beşiktaş Naval Museum:** Turkey's largest naval museum showcasing Ottoman caiques, ship models, and maritime artifacts, alongside temporary exhibitions.

**17- Barbaros Hayrettin Pasha Monument:** A monument honoring the famous Ottoman admiral, located in Beşiktaş Square by the pier.

**18- Çırağan Palace:** A former Ottoman palace now serving as a luxury hotel, offering tea breaks with a Bosphorus view.

**19- Ortaköy Mosque:** A Baroque-style mosque on the Bosphorus, located near the Bosphorus Bridge, known for its iconic architecture and views.

**20- Ortaköy Square:** A bustling area with kumpir and waffle vendors, handmade jewelry stalls, and stunning views of the Bosphorus.

**21- Bosphorus Bridge:** Offering a magnificent view, this iconic structure connects Europe and Asia, best enjoyed from Ortaköy Square at sunset.







● Distant Route

This walking route through old Istanbul invites you to explore the rich legacy of three great empires, combining breathtaking views and iconic landmarks with the living vibrancy of the city. Starting with a walk across the **Galata Bridge**, you'll experience stunning views of the Golden Horn before arriving at **Eminönü Square**, where the **New Mosque** and **Spice Bazaar** immerse you in the grandeur of the Ottoman period.

From there, visit **Sirkeci Station**, the last stop of the Orient Express, and **Cağaloğlu**, home to historic baths and printing houses. Continue to the magnificent **Topkapı Palace** and **Gülhane Park**, then marvel at the splendor of **Hagia Sophia**, the **Basilica Cistern**, and the **Sultanahmed Mosque** in **Sultanahmet Square**. Nearby, explore the **Column of Constantine**, **Çemberlitaş Bath**, and the **Grand Bazaar**, one of the largest and oldest covered markets in the world.

Finally, journey to **Süleymaniye Mosque**, a masterpiece by Mimar Sinan, and end your walk in the historic **Zeyrek** neighborhood, home to the **Molla Zeyrek Mosque** and the recently restored **Zeyrek Çinili Bath**. This route offers an unforgettable experience of Istanbul's layered history, stunning architecture, and vibrant culture.



# Nearby Recommendations

## Art Galleries

### Öktem Aykut

Founded in 2014 by Doğa Öktem and Tankut Aykut, the gallery in Beyoğlu showcases local artists interpreting social dynamics.

For detailed information: [www.oktemaykut.com](http://www.oktemaykut.com)

### Dirimart

Since 2002, Dirimart has exhibited internationally renowned and emerging artists while promoting cosmopolitanism and diversity.

For detailed information: [www.dirimart.com](http://www.dirimart.com)

### The OG Gallery

Founded in 2023 by Senem Özören, the gallery supports young Turkish artists exploring global issues with intellectual depth.

For detailed information: [www.ogthegallery.com](http://www.ogthegallery.com)

### Sanatorium

Established in 2011, SANATORIUM collaborates with artists and curators to host innovative exhibitions and free art events at its Karaköy locations.

For detailed information: [www.sanatorium.com.tr](http://www.sanatorium.com.tr)

### Zilberman

Since 2008, Zilberman has expanded globally to Berlin and Miami while supporting emerging talents and showcasing art in Istanbul's Mısır Apartment and Piyalepaşa.

For detailed information:

[www.zilbermangallery.com/home.htm](http://www.zilbermangallery.com/home.htm)



### Galeri Nev

Founded in 1987 by Haldun Dostoğlu, Galeri Nev has been instrumental in shaping Turkey's contemporary art scene for over 35 years, located in Mısır Apartment.

For detailed information: [www.galerinevistanbul.com](http://www.galerinevistanbul.com)

### Galerist

Established in 2001, Galerist nurtures Turkish contemporary artists and operates in Passage Petits-Champs, Pera, offering a 250 sqm exhibition space.

For detailed information: [www.galerist.com.tr](http://www.galerist.com.tr)

### Pilot Galeri & Co-PILOT

Located on Siraselviler Avenue, PILOT supports interdisciplinary projects, while Co-PILOT serves as a multifunctional space for various creative events.

For detailed information: [www.pilotgaleri.com/en/homes](http://www.pilotgaleri.com/en/homes)

## Museums & Culture Centers

### Borusan Contemporary

Located in Istanbul's Perili K şk, Borusan Contemporary blends contemporary art with media and digital installations, integrating exhibition and office spaces for a unique experience.

For detailed information: [www.borusancontemporary.com/en](http://www.borusancontemporary.com/en)

### Pera Museum

Pera Museum features permanent collections like "Orientalist Paintings" and "K tahya Tiles and Ceramics," while fostering societal dialogue through art.

For detailed information: [www.peramuseum.org](http://www.peramuseum.org)

### Rahmi Ko Museum

Located in Hask y, the Rahmi Ko Museum showcases industrial heritage, focusing on communication and transportation themes across 27,000 sqm of exhibition space.

For detailed information: <https://rmk-museum.org.tr/istanbul/en>

### Sakıp Sabancı Museum

Located in Emirgan, the Sakıp Sabancı Museum combines art exhibitions and educational programs, housed in the historic Equestrian Mansion.

For detailed information:

<https://www.sakipsabancimuzesi.org/en>

### MSGSU Istanbul Museum of Painting and Sculpture

Affiliated with Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University, the museum showcases Turkey's art history, from the Ottoman period to the Republican era.

For detailed information:

[www.irhm.msgsu.edu.tr/en/homepage](http://www.irhm.msgsu.edu.tr/en/homepage)

### Artistanbul Feshane

Located in the historic Feshane building, Artistanbul Feshane hosts modern art exhibitions and workshops, merging history with contemporary art.

For detailed information:

<https://kultursanat.istanbul/mekanlarimiz/art-istanbul-feshane>

### Museum Gazhane

Transformed from a gasworks facility, Museum Gazhane in Kadık y hosts art exhibitions, workshops, and events while emphasizing sustainability.

For detailed information: [www.muzegazhane.istanbul](http://www.muzegazhane.istanbul)

### Arter

Established in 2010, Arter supports contemporary art with exhibitions, performances, and workshops, fostering a dialogue between art and society.

For detailed information: <https://www.arter.org.tr/home>



### **Istanbul Archaeological Museums**

Comprising three sections, the Istanbul Archaeological Museums preserve artifacts from ancient civilizations, tracing Turkey's rich cultural heritage.

For detailed information: <https://muze.gov.tr>

### **Elgiz Museum**

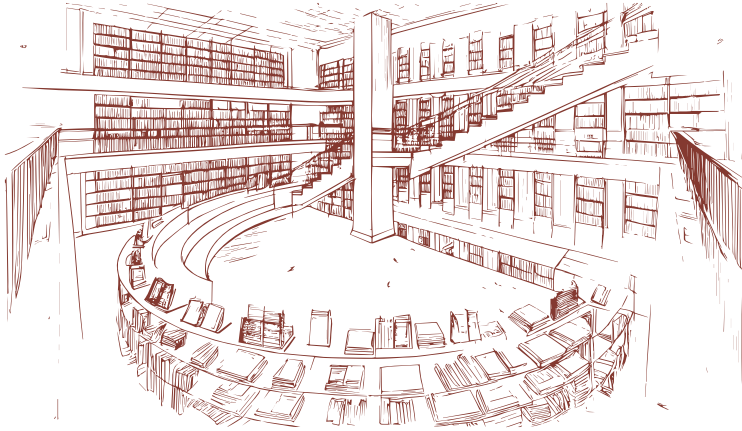
Founded in 2001, Elgiz Museum promotes modern and contemporary art through exhibitions, emerging artist support, and its rooftop sculpture terrace.

For detailed information: [www.elgizmuseum.org/en\\_US](http://www.elgizmuseum.org/en_US)

### **Ara Güler Museum**

Opened in 2018, this museum in Bomontiada showcases Ara Güler's iconic photographs, personal archives, and insights into Istanbul's history.

For detailed information: [www.aragulermuzesi.com](http://www.aragulermuzesi.com)



## Libraries & Working Places

### Atatürk Library

Located in Taksim, this historic library offers a vast collection of texts and stunning Bosphorus views, making it a favorite for researchers and students. Its modern design and peaceful atmosphere provide an ideal environment for studying.

### Istanbul Central Public Library (Beyazıt State Library)

Near Beyazıt Square, this library blends historical architecture with modern facilities, offering a rich collection of books, manuscripts, and digital resources for research and casual reading.

### Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar Literature Museum and Library

Located in Gülhane Park, this library is dedicated to Turkish literature, offering a serene space and hosting literary events, making it a hub for book lovers.

### Kadıköy Public Library

Situated on Istanbul's Asian side, this cozy library provides a community-focused space with workshops, digital resources, and a welcoming environment for locals.

### Workinton

With branches in Levent, Maslak, and Galata, Workinton offers modern coworking spaces equipped with high-speed internet, meeting rooms, and a vibrant network for freelancers and startups.

## Parks & Recreation Centers

### Belgrad Forest

Located on the outskirts of Istanbul, Belgrad Forest is one of the city's largest green spaces. With walking, jogging, and cycling trails winding through dense woodland, it offers a refreshing escape from urban life. Popular for weekend hikes, it's a favorite among nature lovers, families, and sports enthusiasts.

### Maçka Democracy Park

Maçka Democracy Park is a serene green heaven in Istanbul, situated between Beşiktaş and Nişantaşı. It features walking paths, playgrounds, and open spaces, offering a quiet escape for residents. The cable car ride provides stunning views of the Bosphorus, making it a favorite for photographers and visitors alike.

### Yıldız Park

Yıldız Park, located between Beşiktaş and Ortaköy, is a historic green space that was once part of the Ottoman imperial gardens. It features ponds, pavilions, and walking paths, offering scenic views of the Bosphorus. The park is a favorite for picnics and strolls, and it houses the renowned Yıldız Chalet, open to visitors.

### Göztepe Park

Göztepe Park, located in Kadıköy on the Asian side, is famous for its landscaped gardens and vibrant flower displays. With walking paths, playgrounds, and picnic areas, it's a tranquil retreat for families and runners. The park offers a peaceful escape while remaining close to Kadıköy's lively atmosphere.



### Emirgan Park

Emirgan Park, situated along the Bosphorus in the Emirgan neighborhood, is renowned for its breathtaking tulip displays in spring. With walking paths, picnic spots, and serene lakes, it's ideal for leisurely strolls or family gatherings. The park's historic pavilions and vibrant seasonal flowers add charm, drawing visitors citywide.

### Florya Atatürk Forest

Florya Atatürk Forest, located on the European side along the Marmara Sea, combines forested areas with coastal views. The park features walking and cycling paths, open lawns, and a serene beach area, making it ideal for outdoor activities. Its sea views and greenery make it a favorite for weekend picnics and long strolls by the water.



## Hamams (Turkish Baths)

### Kılıç Ali Pasha Hamam

Kılıç Ali Pasha Hamam, built by Mimar Sinan between 1578 and 1583, is a masterpiece of Ottoman architecture in Istanbul's Tophane district. Originally part of the Kılıç Ali Paşa Mosque complex, it features a central dome and elegant marble interiors. Today, the hamam offers an authentic experience daily from 8:00 AM to 10:00 PM, blending relaxation with Ottoman heritage.

### Çinili Hamam

Çinili Hamam, located in Istanbul's Üsküdar district, was built in 1640 by Sultan Kösem and is named after the Iznik tiles that once adorned its walls. With a central dome, marble floors, and ornate fountains, it showcases traditional Ottoman bath architecture. Open daily from 7:00 AM to 10:00 PM, it offers a tranquil and historic hammam experience in separate sections for men and women.

### Hürrem Sultan Hamam

Hürrem Sultan Hamam, situated between the Hagia Sophia and the Blue Mosque, was commissioned by Hürrem Sultan in 1556 and designed by Mimar Sinan. This masterpiece of Ottoman architecture features twin sections for men and women, marble interiors, and high domes. Once a royal bath, it now offers luxurious hamam services daily from 8:00 AM to 10:00 PM, blending history with relaxation.

### Çukurcuma Hamam

Çukurcuma Hamam, built in 1831 in Istanbul's Çukurcuma neighborhood, showcases classic Ottoman bath architecture with marble interiors and a central dome. Known for its intimate atmosphere, it's a favorite among locals. Open daily from 8:00 AM to 9:00 PM, it offers traditional Turkish bath services in a serene setting.



## Dining Venues

### Yeni Lokanta

Yeni Lokanta, situated in Istanbul's Beyoğlu district, reimagines traditional Turkish and Anatolian cuisine with a modern twist, emphasizing seasonal and regional ingredients. Founded by Chef Civan Er in 2013, it offers a stylish yet welcoming ambiance with Turkish tiles and street-facing large doors. Recognized by the Michelin Guide, Yeni Lokanta is a top destination for innovative Turkish dining.

For detailed information: <https://www.yenilokanta.com>

### Arnavutköy Balıkçısı

Arnavutköy Balıkçısı, located in Istanbul's Arnavutköy district, is celebrated for its fresh seafood, seasonal fish, and mezes, paired with stunning Bosphorus views. Its Bodrum branch, recognized with the prestigious Gault&Millau award, has become a summer favorite. Blending traditional Turkish seafood with modern presentation, it's a top choice for seafood enthusiasts.

For detailed information:

<http://arnavutkoybalikcisirestaurant.com/en/welcome-en>

### Pera Thai

Pera Thai, Istanbul's first Thai restaurant, has been serving authentic Thai cuisine since 2001. Prepared by Thai women chefs, its menu features fresh, homemade curries and classic dishes that delight Thai food lovers. Known for its warm and elegant atmosphere, Pera Thai quickly earned the Thai Select award and remains a favorite spot for quality dining experiences.

For detailed information: [www.perathai.com.tr](http://www.perathai.com.tr)

### Aheste

Aheste, amidst the exciting texture of Pera, offers an elegant and mystical ambiance, serving traditional Turkish cuisine along with vegetarian dishes and high-quality tasting menus.

For detailed information: [www.ahesterestaurant.com](http://www.ahesterestaurant.com)

### Karaköy Restaurant

It is a family business with the concept of an "esnaf lokantası" (tradesmen's restaurant). Opened in 2000, the restaurant offers both traditional dishes and casseroles. Their delicious mezes are served alongside "lion's milk", the traditional Turkish drink, raki.

For detailed information:

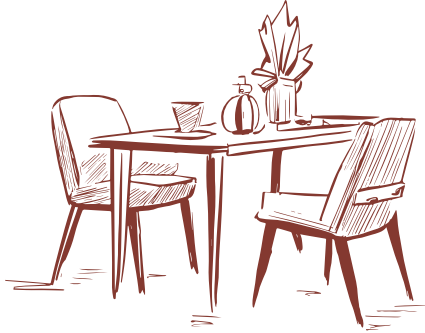
<https://www.karakoylokantasi.com/en>

### Miss Pizza

Both at Şişhane and Cihangir locations, Miss Pizza offers traditional Italian products as starters, salads, pizzas and desserts.

For detailed information: [www.misspizza.com.tr](http://www.misspizza.com.tr)





### Çok Çok Pera

Çok Çok Pera offers exotic Thai flavors crafted by Chef Khun Nuch, former head chef for the Thai Royal Family, and her team. Located in the historic former American Consulate Building, the restaurant blends contemporary Thai cuisine with unique concepts like Ernest's Bar, featuring cocktails inspired by Ernest Hemingway, and Agatha's Room, honoring Agatha Christie. The ambiance reflects the grandeur and natural elements of distant Asia.

For detailed information: [www.cokcokpera.com/tr](http://www.cokcokpera.com/tr)

### Cecconi's

It is an Italian restaurant located in the back garden of Palazzo Corpi. As a member of the Soho House family, Venice-originated Cecconi's offers handmade pastas, seafood, and various flavors like cicchetti from Northern Italy to both members and non-members alike.

For detailed information: [www.cecconistanbul.com/tr](http://www.cecconistanbul.com/tr)

### Asmalı Cavıt

Located in the heart of Asmalımescit, this two-story venue with its warm and intimate ambiance is one of the places that continues Istanbul's meyhane (tavern) culture. This family-run establishment serves mezes, seafood, and traditional dishes.

### Il Cortile Galata

Located inside the Ecole St. Pierre Hotel, Il Cortile, which means 'Courtyard' in Italian, makes you feel like you are in a small town in Italy with its historical atmosphere and the concept of its location. You can still see parts of the ancient Galata walls preserved and standing strong here. On the menu, you can find Italian flavors, Turkish cuisine, and classic cocktails.

For detailed information: <https://estphotel.com/ilcortile>

### Hacı Abdullah Restaurant

Hacı Abdullah, one of Istanbul's oldest restaurants, opened in 1888 with the permission of Sultan Abdulhamid II. Preserving the Master-Apprentice tradition rooted in the Ahilik Guild Organization, it considers itself a continuation of this heritage. Renowned for its authentic Turkish and Ottoman cuisine, it remains a significant destination for both local and international guests.

For detailed information: <https://www.haciabdullah.com.tr/>

### Mikla

Mikla, which opened in October 2005 as a contemporary Istanbul restaurant, quickly became one of the city's top dining destinations. In 2012, it introduced "New Anatolian Cuisine," elevating its reputation on both local and international platforms. Recognized in "The World's 50 Best Restaurants" from 2015 to 2022, Mikla ranked 44th in 2018 and earned Michelin stars in 2023 and 2024. It has also received accolades like Best Manager, Best Bartender, and three toques in the Gault & Millau guide, showcasing its consistent excellence.

For detailed information: [www.miklarestaurant.com](http://www.miklarestaurant.com)

### Neolokal

Founded in 2014 in Istanbul by Chef Maksut Aşkar, it shares the flavor 'from the earth' with its guests as a gastronomic experience by interpreting contemporary Anatolian cuisine. The restaurant, which received a Michelin star in 2024, operates on the top floor of SALT Galata.

For detailed information: [www.neolokal.com/en/neolokal\\_en](http://www.neolokal.com/en/neolokal_en)

### **Türk Fatih Tutak**

"Without falling away from our morals, by using the products from our geography, we are creating a new alphabet for Turkish cuisine and reinterpreting the tastes we are familiar to, in a modern, elegant and simple way. Researching, being curious and developing new techniques constantly, is the summary of our philosophy". Their signature service is 13-course Micro Seasonal Tasting Menu with delightful surprises for to indulge in a sophisticated culinary journey.

For detailed information: [www.turkft.com](http://www.turkft.com)

### **Alaf**

It is a restaurant that combines traditional Turkish cuisine with modern culinary techniques. Chef Murat Deniz Temel, who has a Yörük (Turkish nomadic) background, aims to offer his guests an unforgettable culinary experience by reinterpreting Anatolian cuisine. The restaurant offers both a Tasting Menu and A La Carte options.

For detailed information:

<https://www.alafkurucesme.com/en/home>

### **Arkestra**

Michelin-starred Arkestra, led by Chef Cenk Debensason, offers Modern European cuisine with seasonal dishes rooted in French techniques and local ingredients. The elegant yet relaxed dining hall, adorned with wooden panels and Art Deco chandeliers, extends to a charming courtyard for outdoor dining in spring and summer.

For detailed information: [www.arkestra.com.tr](http://www.arkestra.com.tr)

### **Balıkçı Sabahattin**

Balıkçı Sabahattin offers an authentic seafood experience in Istanbul, blending family expertise from Trilye with a charming 1927 wooden house setting. Guests can enjoy its renowned dishes year-round, with outdoor dining available during summer for a cozy, relaxed atmosphere.

For detailed information:

<https://www.balikcisabahattin.com/en>

### **Pandeli**

Opened in 1901 by Pandeli Çobanoğlu, it is one of the oldest restaurants in Istanbul that is still in operation. It is a representative of traditional Turkish cuisine. The restaurant creates a wonderful atmosphere, especially with the tiles inside. It has hosted notable guests such as Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, Queen Elizabeth II, Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, Yahya Kemal, and Audrey Hepburn.

For detailed information:

<https://www.pandeli.com.tr/index.html>

### **BİZ**

BİZ Istanbul, located in Atatürk Cultural Centre, celebrates the cultural diversity of Istanbul by preserving its nearly forgotten culinary traditions and passing them down to future generations. Honored by Gault & Millau in the Traditional Cuisine category, it showcases the city's rich heritage on a global stage, emphasizing cultural sustainability.

For detailed information: <https://www.bizistanbul.com.tr/en>

### **Gallada**

Gallada is a modern restaurant located in Istanbul's Galata district. It combines Turkish and Mediterranean cuisine, offering creative dishes made with local ingredients. The restaurant stands out with its stylish and cozy atmosphere, featuring a view of the Galata Tower. The menu includes seafood, meat, and vegetarian options, along with an extensive selection of wines and cocktails. Gallada is an ideal spot for a pleasant dinner or special occasions.

For detailed information: [www.galladaistanbul.com/en](http://www.galladaistanbul.com/en)

### Liman Istanbul

Liman Istanbul, located in Karaköy's historic Passenger Terminal, combines its rich heritage with modern elegance. Reopened in 2021 by D.ream Group, it offers refined Turkish hospitality, stunning Bosphorus views, and a perfect setting for business dinners, celebrations, or relaxed evenings.

For detailed information: <https://www.limanistanbul.com/en>

### Hünkâr

Hünkâr was first established in Fatih in 1950 and moved to Nişantaşı in 2000. Today, in Hünkâr Cuisine, a rich taste culture that has not been eradicated since 1950, continues by adding flavor with management of Feridun Ügümü and Galip Ügümü. Also, Hünkâr Restaurant was in one of the restaurants which in "The Best Restaurants Of World" list that is accepted single valid list selected by "Restaurant Magazine" in 2007.

For detailed information: [www.hunkarnisantasi.com/en/home](http://www.hunkarnisantasi.com/en/home)

### Okra İstanbul

Okra is a modern Istanbul restaurant blending Turkish and Mediterranean flavors with creative dishes and fresh ingredients. Its stylish yet cozy atmosphere and focus on quality make it perfect for casual dining or special occasions, offering a refined twist on classic flavors.

For detailed information:

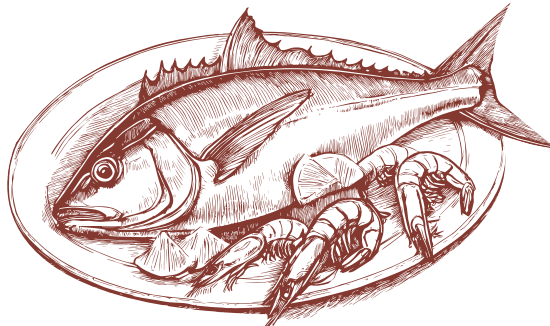
<https://www.okraistanbul.com/index-en.html>

### Smelt & Co.

Smelt & Co. specializes in fresh, sustainably sourced seafood, blending Turkish flavors with seasonal and local ingredients. Known for its minimalist design and expertly crafted dishes, it offers a warm atmosphere perfect for casual dining or special occasions, ideal for seafood lovers seeking innovative and sustainable cuisine.

For detailed information:

<https://www.instagram.com/smeltandco>



## Local Flavors

### Ali Muhiddin Hacı Bekir

Hacı Bekir, founded in 1777 in Istanbul, is one of the world's oldest confectionery producers and a symbol of Turkish culinary heritage. Renowned for its lokum, akide candies, and marzipan, it served as the confectioner to the Ottoman palace and now combines tradition with modern techniques. The shop also operates as a museum, showcasing its rich history and unique flavors.

For detailed information:

<https://www.hacibekir.com/Home/Index>

### Cafer Erol

Although the first shop, established in Istanbul in 1807 by Mehmet Efendi, was destroyed in a fire, it was reopened in 1935 by Mehmet Efendi's grandson, Cafer Erol. Currently, it operates from a single store in Kadıköy. In addition to traditional treats, modern products like chocolate, wafers, and cream are also sold.

For detailed information:

<https://www.sekercicafererol.com/en>

### Karaköy Güllüoğlu

Nadir Güllü, a fifth-generation representative of a family that has been making baklava since 1843 at Karaköy Güllüoğlu, operates under the same brand in a single shop in Karaköy. With the training, experience, and craftsmanship he gained from his father and master, Hacı Mustafa Güllü, they continue to make traditional sweets such as baklava, şöbiyet, and kadayıf using natural ingredients sourced from local producers. They are also renowned for their böreks (pastry).

For detailed information:

<https://www.karakoygulluoglu.com>



### Kuru Kahveci Mehmet Efendi

It was founded in 1871 by Kuru Kahveci Mehmet Efendi, who worked in his father's spice shop. In earlier times, coffee was sold in its raw form, but Mehmet Efendi began roasting it and selling it in small paper bags. This transformation helped "Turkish Coffee" gain worldwide fame. In addition to classic coffees, you can also find their own production of sweets at their shop in Eminönü.

For detailed information:

<https://www.mehmetefendi.com/eng>

### Vefa Bozacısı

The Historical Vefa Bozacısı was established in 1876 in the Vefa neighborhood. Boza, a traditional Turkish drink made from millet semolina, water, and sugar, is typically consumed in winter and is one of the oldest Turkish beverages. Still operating in the same shop, Vefa Bozacısı has created a cultural tradition that its customers have cherished for many years.

For detailed information:

<https://vefa.com.tr/index.php?dil=tr&sayfa=anasayfa>

## Cocktail Bar & Clubs

### Nardis Jazz Club

Nardis Jazz Club, established on October 29, 2002, celebrated its 22nd anniversary in 2024 and entered its 24th year. Located in Galata, it has been hosting live jazz concerts six days a week for over two decades, making it Turkey's longest-standing jazz club. Known for its consistent quality, Nardis is a top destination for jazz in Istanbul and Turkey, recognized internationally by jazz enthusiasts and musicians alike. Featured in the prestigious Down Beat magazine and recommended by global travel guides, Nardis is a must-visit venue for jazz lovers in Istanbul.

For detailed information:

<https://www.nardisjazz.com>

### Monkey İstanbul

Monkey Bar, located on the rooftop of the Nejat Eczacıbaşı IKSVM building in Şişhane, offers a unique terrace experience with stunning views of the Golden Horn and the historic peninsula. Known for its enchanting sunsets, delicious cocktails, and vibrant atmosphere, it blends artful decor with music and entertainment from 6:00 PM to 2:00 AM. Monkey Bar is the perfect spot for summer evenings, afternoon meetups, and unforgettable bar conversations.

For detailed information:

<https://www.monkeyistanbul.com/index-en.html>



### 360istanbul

360istanbul, located on the top floor of the historic Mısır Apartment, offers award-winning dining with world and modern Turkish cuisine, a rich bar menu, and breathtaking 360-degree views of Istanbul. By night, it transforms into a vibrant club hosting international artists and DJs, harmoniously blending Food, Atmosphere, Entertainment, and Ambiance for a unique experience.

For detailed information:

<https://360istanbul.com>

### **Arkestra: Listening Room**

An audiophile bar serving craft cocktails and savoury snacks. Upstairs from the restaurant is the Listening Room – an intimate setting for pre-dinner aperitifs or late-night cocktails and snacks. Palm tree feature walls, lounge seating, low cocktail tables and dim lighting, set the scene, while a wall of vinyl records confirms you are here for the music. The Listening Room hosts a rotation of weekly events where selectors pick records from Arkestra's collection or bring their own.

For detailed information:

<https://arkestra.com.tr/?#section40>

### **Batard**

Batard offers a refined European dining experience with a Turkish twist, blending French, German, and local flavors. The seasonal menu highlights fresh ingredients and creative dishes, including expertly crafted meat and seafood, paired with an extensive wine selection. Its minimalist yet elegant setting makes it a top choice for sophisticated fine dining in Istanbul.

For detailed information:

<https://www.instagram.com/batardistanbul>

### **Lucca**

Since 2004, Lucca has been a Bebek staple, known for its Mediterranean-inspired dishes, trendsetting cocktails, and vibrant nightlife. Offering vegan and organic options alongside first-class wines, it's famous for its iconic Sunday brunches and lively evenings with performances by local and international DJs, making it a go-to spot for dining and entertainment.

For detailed information:

<https://luccastyle.com>

### **Upperist Taksim**

Upperist in Istanbul offers a modern dining experience with stunning city skyline views, blending Turkish and international cuisine. With chic décor, vibrant ambiance, and a curated wine list, it's perfect for casual meals or special occasions. By evening, it transforms into a lively venue with music, attracting both locals and visitors.

For detailed information:

<https://www.upperist.com.tr/index-en.html>

### **Tavern**

Tavern Istanbul is known for its lively nightlife, offering energetic evenings filled with live music and entertainment. With local and international performances, it becomes a hotspot for socializing and fun. Paired with delicious mezes, cocktails, and an extensive wine selection, it's the perfect destination for those seeking a vibrant night out in the city.

For detailed information: [www.instagram.com/tavern\\_\\_\\_\\_/](http://www.instagram.com/tavern____/)

### **Soho House**

Located in the historic Beyoğlu district, Soho House Istanbul occupies the 1873-built Palazzo Corpi, retaining original 19th-century frescoes and featuring a traditional Turkish hammam. The House also includes a Cowshed spa, gym with a boxing ring, screening room, and a rooftop offering stunning views of the Bosphorus. Guests can choose from four restaurants, including modern Turkish dishes and a Greek-Mykonian menu at Apheleia.

For detailed information:

<https://www.sohohouse.com/tr/houses/soho-house-istanbul>



## Cafes

### Noir Pit Coffee Co. Pera

The coffee shop located on the corner of the part of our hotel that descends to Meşrutiyet Street will invite you in with the aroma of coffee as soon as you reach the top of the street

For detailed information:  
<https://www.noirpit.com>

### Ecuador Coffee House

Ecuador Coffee House, located a 30-second walk from the hotel, is one of the most popular coffee shops in Pera. You can either recharge your energy with a takeaway order while exploring Istanbul or sit in the cafe and observe the vibrant life of Pera.

For detailed information:  
<https://www.instagram.com/ecuadorcoffeehouse>

### Coffee Baroque

Coffee Baroque, located on Büyük Hendek Street in the Galata area, welcomes its guests in an atmosphere steeped in history. Combining the classic coffee experience with artistic and Baroque architectural influences, Coffee Baroque offers delightful moments with its croissants and freshly made desserts alongside the coffee.

For detailed information:  
<https://www.instagram.com/coffeebaroque>

### Old Java Coffee Roasters

Old Java, based in Galata, has been producing specialty coffee since 2014, offering unique concepts in its branches to challenge monotony. At its Galata production house, expert-roasted coffee beans are prepared twice a week, ensuring quality and freshness. Alongside coffee, Old Java offers high-quality food designed to complement its beverages and shop concepts, making it a standout in Istanbul's coffee scene.

For detailed information: <https://oldjavacoffee.com>

### Federal

It has been open in Galata since 2015. In the shop, designed to match the history and texture of Galata, you can find freshly brewed coffee and daily pastries.

For detailed information:  
<https://federal.coffee/>



## Stores

### Misela

Founded in 2008 by Serra Türker, Misela is a luxury handbag and accessories brand renowned for its beautifully crafted bags, travel accessories, and home decor. Inspired by the vibrant culture and contemporary design scene of Istanbul, Misela combines traditional Turkish craftsmanship with modern aesthetics to create timeless and sophisticated designs.

For detailed information:

<https://www.misela.com/mainpage.aspx>

### Vitruta

The shop, opened on Meşrutiyet Street in 2018, produces minimal designs of northern fashion with an approach that resonates with the identity and spirit of Pera's streets.

For detailed information:

<https://www.vitruta.com/en>



## For Emergency

### Acibadem Taksim Hospital

Located in Taksim with a 24,000 m<sup>2</sup> area, this general-purpose hospital has 93 beds and 7 operating rooms. It features specialized units such as a General Intensive Care Unit with 10 beds (2 isolation) and a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit with 7 beds (1 isolation). The Emergency Department includes resuscitation, surgical, and orthopedic intervention rooms, alongside consultation rooms for key specialties.

For detailed information:

<https://www.acibadem.com.tr/hastane/taksim-hastanesi>

### American Hospital

Situated in the heart of Nişantaşı, this 20,000 m<sup>2</sup> hospital was established in 1920 and operates under the Vehbi Koç Foundation. It offers modern medical services in specialties like cardiology, oncology, and neurology, supported by advanced technology. With a 300-bed capacity, it also provides emergency care, intensive care, and diagnostic imaging for both local and international patients.

For detailed information:

<https://www.amerikanhastanesi.org/en>



# Transportation in Istanbul



Istanbul, the city that connects continents. Despite the challenge of managing transportation in a city of approximately 20 million people, it is facilitated by:

2 airports,  
A 367-kilometer rail network,  
12 Inner-City Lines, 12 Bosphorus Lines, 6 Islands Lines,  
A 52-kilometer Metrobus line,  
5,716 buses covering a 7,500-kilometer transportation network,  
19,546 taxis, 162 taxi-dolmuş, 4,268 minibuses.

### Istanbul Airport (European Side)

Located 39 kilometers from Taksim, this airport serves a total of 262 global routes with 201 shops and 85 food and beverage venues. It is accessible by taxi and Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (IBB) buses.

### Sabiha Gökçen Airport (Anatolian Side)

Located 32 kilometers from Kadıköy, this airport can be accessed by taxi, IBB buses, and the metro.

Note: You can reach every part of İstanbul by using buses, metros, and ferries with the ISTANBULKART.

### Taxi

Taxis can be a problem in Istanbul. You may encounter situations such as the limited number of taxis, full taxis, or shift change times. Concepts like short distance (Hop On – Hop Off) may also confuse you.

### Metro

Although more limited compared to European cities, the metro is the most preferred mode of transportation for both İstanbul residents and tourists.

- M1A - Yenikapı - Atatürk Airport (European Side)
- M1B - Yenikapı - Kızıllı (European Side)
- M2 - Yenikapı - Hacıosman  
(Taksim-Mecidiyeköy-Gayrettepe-Levent)
- M11 - Gayrettepe - Arnavutköy (Istanbul Airport)
- T1 (Tram) - Kabataş - Bağcılar
- M4 - Kadıköy - Sabiha Gökçen Airport (Asian Side)
- Metrobus (Bus Rapid Transit) - Söğütlüçeşme / Kadıköy - Avcılar (Europe-Asia)

### Bus

Istanbul has a much broader bus network compared to Europe. You can reach almost all points of İstanbul with a single ride.

### Ferry

Sea transportation holds great importance for İstanbul, a city spanning two continents. Here, you can find the most commonly used central routes.

Kadıköy - Kabataş  
Kadıköy - Karaköy - Eminönü  
Üsküdar - Eminönü  
Beşiktaş - Kadıköy - Karaköy





# General Info About Istanbul

In İstanbul, you can use 3 main service providers for communication. You can also connect to the internet for free through Wi-Fi points provided by the municipality in public areas.

Pharmacies are open from 09:00 to 19:00, except on Sundays. After these hours, you can find a "night pharmacy." All pharmacies post the addresses of night pharmacies on their doors.

In case of emergencies, you can call 112 (police, ambulance, fire brigade, etc.). This hotline is open 24/7 and provides assistance in global languages.

# National Holidays, Celebrations, and Commemorations

New Year: January 1

Ramadan Holiday: March 30 – April 1

National Sovereignty and Children's Day: April 23

Labor and Solidarity Day: May 1

Commemoration of Atatürk, Youth and Sports Day: May 19

Sacrifice of the Feast: June 6 – 9

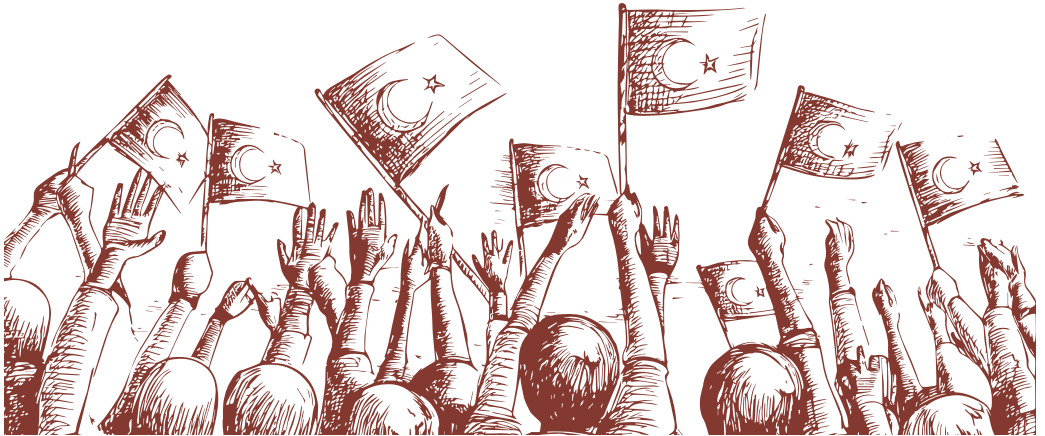
Democracy and National Unity Day: July 15

Victory Day: August 30

Republic Day: October 29

Atatürk Remembrance Day: November 10

— Special days in Turkey are generally celebrated as public holidays. On November 10, Atatürk Remembrance Day, the entire country stands still for a one-minute moment of silence at 9:05 AM.





*Asmalimescit Ave,  
General Yazgan St, No:12  
Pera/Beyoğlu/Istanbul*

*[www.casafoscolo.com](http://www.casafoscolo.com)*



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