

ISTANBUL CITY TOURS *yearround arrangements* (Valid Till : 15 Nov 2018)

The spectacular city of Istanbul enchants the visitors with its history and monuments. Not to mention the countless bargains and the beautiful scenery. Browse through the bazaars, enjoy the breathtaking view of the Bosphorus and find yourself in just a matter of a few seconds on a different continent...

Private tours

1) Fullday Historical tour of old Istanbul, Sultanahmet area

Highlights: Roman Hippodrome, Blue Mosque, Hagia Sophia, Topkapi Palace, Treasury, lunch, Grand Bazaar



Transfer from the hotel to the historical center Sultanahmet. Walking tour starting with **the Roman Hippodrome** and the monuments lined up along the spina of the original hippodrome built by Emperor Septimus Severus in 203 AD. Obelisk of Theodosius, walled column, serpentine column from Delphi and the German Fountain, gift from Kaiser Wilhelm II to the Ottoman Sultan Abdulhamit II will be viewed.

Continue with **the Blue Mosque** built by Sultan Ahmet I in 1616, locally called Sultanahmet Mosque but known by its blue Iznik tiles and also famous for its unique 6 minarets. Modest attire recommended. Plastic bag for shoes will be provided as you will have to remove your shoes before entering the mosque.

One of the highlights of the tour is **the Hagia Sophia**. Church of the Holy Wisdom of God from the 6th century built by Justinian between 532 - 537 at the site of the previous two churches by the same name. Following the conquest of the city by the Ottoman Sultan Mehmet II, Ayasofya was converted to a mosque and eventually after the foundation of the Republic of Turkey it has become a museum.

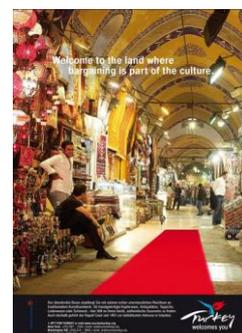
Afternoon dedicated to the touring of **the Topkapi Palace**. Until finally being abandoned to more modern palaces in the middle of the 19th century the palace served as the residence of the Ottoman Sultans as well as the center of administration for 4 centuries. On entering through the Imperial Gate the first monument to be seen is the majestic **fountain of Sultan Ahmet III** followed by the first courtyard housing the Church of St Eirene as well as the Imperial Mint and the Archeological Museum of Istanbul. Through the Gate of Salutation we enter the grounds of the Palace and view the various exhibitions including the imperial kitchens with its rich collection of Japanese and Chinese Ming porcelain as well as the Imperial Council (Kubbealti) and the Tower of Justice. **The Treasury**, housing such exquisite masterpieces as the Topkapi dagger and the Spoonmaker's diamond will be visited. The recently renovated **Holy Relics** section houses collection of the prophet Mohammed's and his caliphs' relics.



Lunch at a local restaurant.

Continue with **the Grand Covered Bazaar (Kapalicarsi)**, a maze of 58 alleys and more than 4.000 shops. Dating from the early days of Ottoman rule in Istanbul, the bazaar houses shops selling local craftsmanship, jewelry, pottery, spices, traditional costumes, belly dancer outfits, leather, carpets and **evil eye** objects among other souvenir articles.

After a long day of discovery of Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman Istanbul, you have the choice of returning to the hotel by bus or stay around in the bazaar for a shopping spree.



Tour accompanied by a licensed guide.

Air-conditioned tour bus, licensed guide, all museum entrance fees, lunch at a local restaurant, tips to the restaurant are included. (Drinks are not included.)

min 02 pax: 155 euros per person

03 - 04 pax: 125 euros per person

05 - 06 pax: 105 euros per person

2) Fullday Bosphorus, Palaces and Asian side of Istanbul

Highlights: Dolmabahce Palace, Bosphorus cruise, Spice Market, lunch, Asian Istanbul



Meeting at the hotel lobby we will proceed by bus to **the Dolmabahce Palace**. Literally meaning the palace of the filled garden, the Dolmabahce Palace was built on a bay on the Bosphorus on reclaimed land during the reign of Sultan Abdulmecit in 1853 by Armenian architects Balyan family. Only **the Selamlık** (men's section) and **Muayede Halls** (ceremonial halls) will be visited. The contrast between classical Ottoman architecture and the western approach adapted in the 19th century will be visible during our tour. The harem is also visited with particular emphasis on the room where the founder of the Republic of Turkey, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk who spent his last days in the palace died on 10 November 1938.

For a more leisurely continuation of the tour we embark a private motorboat for **a cruise on the Strait of Bosphorus** which separates the European and Asian continents and makes Istanbul a unique city built on two continents.

Among the monuments to be viewed are the **Rumeli and Anatolian Fortresses** which were built by the Ottomans to help conquer Constantinople and the palaces such as the **Beylerbeyi Palace** and **Ciragan Palace** (now Kempinski Hotel), **Kucuksu Pavilion** as well as the picturesque little villages and wooden mansions along the shores of the Bosphorus. Our boat will cruise under the two suspension bridges built to cross between the two sides of the city, in other words between two continents. The Bosphorus Bridge from 1973 and the Conqueror Bridge from 1988 are very important thoroughfares between continents just as the Bosphorus is a very important sea route connecting the ports of the Black Sea to the Aegean and Mediterranean.



Discover the **Asian side** of Istanbul.

Intercontinental **Bosphorus Suspension Bridge** crossing to the Asian side of the city. Enjoy the panoramic view from **Camlica Hill**. Return to the **European side** of the city.

Lunch at a local restaurant.

Continue with **the Egyptian Spice Market (Misir Carsisi)**, built 1664 within the complex of the New Mosque, this is the in place for spices, dried fruits, fruit teas, nuts, variety of Turkish delight (lokum) and souvenirs in one of the most exotic ambiances of the city.

After a long day of discovery of Istanbul return to the hotel.

Tour accompanied by a licensed English speaking guide.

Air-conditioned tour bus, licensed guide, cruise on the Bosphorus (private for min 10 pax), all museum entrance fees, lunch at a fish restaurant, tips to the restaurant are included. (Drinks are not included.)

min 02 pax: 155 euros per person

03 - 04 pax: 125 euros per person

05 - 06 pax: 105 euros per person

3) Halfday historical city tour

Departure for city tour with a visit to the main historical center of Istanbul, Sultanahmet with its Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman monuments. The monuments to be visited are the Blue Mosque, Roman Hippodrome and the Topkapi Palace with its Treasury and the Grand Bazaar.

Transfer from the hotel to the historical center Sultanahmet. Walking tour starting with **the Roman Hippodrome** and the monuments lined up along the spina of the original hippodrome built by Emperor Septimus Severus in 203 AD. Obelisk of Theodosius, walled column, serpentine column from Delphi and the German Fountain, gift from Kaiser Wilhelm II to the Ottoman Sultan Abdulhamit II will be viewed.

Continue with **the Blue Mosque** built by Sultan Ahmet I in 1616, locally called Sultanahmet Mosque but known by its blue Iznik tiles and also famous for its unique 6 minarets. Modest attire recommended. Plastic bag for shoes will be provided as you will have to remove your shoes before entering the mosque.

Continue with the **Topkapi Palace**. Until finally being abandoned to more modern palaces in the middle of the 19th century the palace served as the residence of the Ottoman Sultans as well as the center of administration for 4 centuries. **The Treasury**, housing such exquisite masterpieces as the Topkapi dagger and the Spoonmaker's diamond will be visited.

Continue with **the Grand Covered Bazaar (Kapalicarsi)**, a maze of 58 alleys and more than 4.000 shops. Dating from the early days of Ottoman rule in Istanbul, the bazaar houses shops selling local craftsmanship, jewelry, pottery, spices, traditional costumes, belly dancer outfits, leather, carpets and **evil eye** objects among other souvenir articles.

Return to the hotel after the tour.



Including transfers, licensed guide, museum entrances and visits

Lunch not included

min 02 pax: 145 euros per person

03 - 04 pax: 115 euros per person

05 - 06 pax: 95 euros per person

4) Halfday Bosphorus tour

We start with a visit to the **Spice Market** located next to the New Mosque facing the Galata Bridge spanning over the **Golden Horn**. A totally oriental experience with local herbs, spices, Turkish delight, assortments of sweets, dried fruits and souvenirs are on sale.

A **cruise on the Bosphorus** will introduce us to the rich cultural heritage of the palaces, fortresses, wooden Ottoman villas and lively little fishing villages and famous nightspots of the city. Among the monuments to be viewed are the **Rumeli and Anatolian Fortresses** which were built by the Ottomans to help conquer Constantinople and the palaces such as the **Beylerbeyi Palace** and **Ciragan Palace** (now Kempinski Hotel), **Kucuksu Pavilion** as well as the picturesque little villages and wooden mansions along the shores of the Bosphorus. Our boat will cruise under the two suspension bridges built to cross between the two sides of the city, in other words between two continents. The Bosphorus Bridge from 1973 and the Conqueror Bridge from 1988 are very important thoroughfares between continents just as the Bosphorus is a very important sea route connecting the ports of the Black Sea to the Aegean and Mediterranean.

Lunch not included.

Return to the hotel after the tour.



Including transfers, licensed guide, museum entrances and visits, cruise on the Bosphorus (private for min 10 pax) Lunch not included

min 02 pax: 140 euros per person

03 - 04 pax: 110 euros per person

05 - 06 pax: 90 euros per person

5) Fullday Art & Culture tour: European Istanbul - Pera, Istiklal Street and Galata

Our tour starts with a pick up from your hotel and driving to the **Taksim Square**, the main square of central Istanbul which has been pedestrianized recently. We move on to the Pera district known as Beyoglu in Turkish centred around the pedestrian Istiklal Street. **The pedestrian Istiklal Street** is visited by nearly 3 million people in a single day over the course of weekends who spend time at its boutiques, music stores, bookstores, art galleries, cinemas, theaters, libraries, cafés, pubs, night clubs, historical patisseries and restaurants. Displaying the unique nineteenth century Turkish architecture, the street starts from the medieval Genoese neighborhood around **Galata Tower** and ultimately leads up to the **Taksim Square**.

The cosmopolitan avenue is surrounded by an array of historical and politically significant buildings, such as the **Çiçek Pasajı** (Flower Passage) where small, intimate restaurants and taverns are found; **Balık Pazarı** (**The Fish Market**), the **Roman Catholic churches of Santa Maria and S. Antonio di Padova**, the **Greek Orthodox Haghia Triada**, the **Armenian Church** (among many other churches), several synagogues, mosques, academic institutions established by various European nations such as Austria, France, Germany and Italy in the early 19th century, consulates (former embassies before 1923) of several nations including France, Greece, Russia, Spain, Sweden, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

Visit the **Pera Museum** founded by the members of the Koç family. The permanent exhibition includes Turkish orientalist painting with masterpieces such as the Turtle Trainer by Osman Hamdi Bey as well as Anatolian weights and measures, Kütahya tiles and ceramics.

Lunch will be served at a local restaurant.



Visit the **Galata Mevlevihanesi (Mawlawi Dervish House)** dating originally from 1491 and home to the Whirling dervishes over the course of Ottoman history and view the Semahane where the Whirling dervish ritual performances take place.

Continue with a visit to the **Galata Tower**. Built in 1348 by the Genoese colony of Constantinople with the name of Christea Turris, the tower is 66.90 m tall and the panoramic terrace at the top is reached by an elevator. For many years the highest point in Istanbul the tower was used as a fire watch tower and has commanding views of the historical peninsula, the new town, the Bosphorus and the Maiden's Tower, the Asian side and as far away as the Princes' Islands.

For our clients with Jewish interest we will complete the tour with a visit to the **Quincentennial Turkish Jewish Museum** and the **Neve Shalom synagogue**. The Quincentennial Turkish Jews Museum commemorates the 500 years of the Ottoman Sultan Beyazit II's welcoming of the Sephardic Jews expelled from Spain and Portugal in 1492.

At the end of the tour, return to the hotel.

Tour accompanied by a licensed guide.

Air-conditioned tour bus, licensed guide, all museum entrance fees, lunch at a local restaurant, tips to the restaurant are included. (Drinks are not included.)

min 02 pax: 155 euros per person

03 - 04 pax: 125 euros per person

05 - 06 pax: 105 euros per person

6) Halfday Istanbul: Golden Horn, ancient City Walls, Eyup Mosque

Pick up from your hotel and transfer to the Eyup district.

Driving along the southern coast of the inlet of the Bosphorus called the **Golden Horn** we pass by the **Greek Orthodox Patriarchate at Panari (Fener)**, the **Bulgarian Church** which was cast in iron in Austria and brought to where it stands now on a barge across the River Danube, we reach the northern end of the city walls of Constantinople built by Emperor Theodosius II in the 5th century. Viewing the once impregnable walls of the ancient city we reach the Edirnekapi district.



Visit the **St Saviour in Chora - Kariye Museum**. The Church of St. Savior in Chora is considered to be one of the most beautiful examples of a Byzantine church. The church is situated in the western, Edirnekapi district of Istanbul. In the 16th century, the church was converted into a mosque by the Ottoman rulers, and it became a secularized museum in 1948. The interior of the building is covered with fine mosaics and frescoes.

Continue with a visit of the **Eyup Al Ansari Mosque**.

Eyup Sultan is situated outside the Walls of Constantinople, near the Golden Horn. Built in 1458, it was the first mosque constructed by the Ottoman Turks following the conquest of Constantinople in 1453. The Mosque and Mausoleum of Eyüp Sultan, located outside the corner where the land walls meet the walls along the Golden Horn, is considered a sacred site for Moslems. Eyüp-el-Ensari was a standard-bearer of Mohammed and he died-here during an Arabic siege of the city in the 7th century. His grave was discovered at the conquest and later the mausoleum and the first mosque in Istanbul were built on this site. The original mosque was destroyed in an earthquake and the present one was constructed in its place in 1800. On Fridays, holy days for Islam, throngs of the faithful visit the mausoleum. The old trees, flocks of pigeons, the praying believers and the visiting crowds create a mystical and colorful atmosphere around the mosque and the mausoleum. The walls of the mausoleum in the courtyard are covered with tiles from different periods. The sultans succeeding Mehmet the Conqueror completed their coronation and sword-bearing ceremonies with a visit to the Eyup Sultan Mausoleum. The vicinity of the mosque and the neighboring hills are occupied by cemeteries.



Use the short ride of the cable car up the Eyup Hill.

Visit the famous **Pierre Loti Café** named after the well-known poet and author who was enraptured by Istanbul. Enjoy the panoramic view of the Golden Horn and the outlying historical city. *1 glass of tea is served.*

Return to the hotel after the tour.

Including transfers, licensed guide, museum entrances and visits
Lunch not included

min 02 pax: 140 euros per person

03 - 04 pax: 110 euros per person

05 - 06 pax: 90 euros per person

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Updated: AVO-011217