While travelling, we like feeling the city, wake up early with the sun rise, visit all the cultural and historical places and taste the city’s special flavors.

According to that concept, we prepared the “Eat, Love, Pray in Istanbul Guide” which is all about our suggestions with little tips.

We hope you could benefit from the hand book.

Have a good stay and enjoy the city.

Ramada Istanbul Grand Bazaar Family
EAT, LOVE, PRAY

in

İSTANBUL
SOPHIA PITA RESTAURANT & TAPAS

Offers a fusion of authentic and modern Spanish tapas accompanied by a distinguished selection of Turkish wines and selected international wines and liquors, also open for breakfast and dinner with a relaxing atmosphere at the Aya Sofya’s backyard.

Address: Boutique St. Sophia Alemdar Cad. No.2 34122 Sultanahmet / Istanbul

Phone: 009 0212 528 09 73-74

PS: How to get there: The nearest tram station is Sultanahmet or Gulhane tram station.

BALIKÇI SABAHATTIN

“Balıkçı Sabahattin” (Fisherman Sabahattin) was at first running a traditional restaurant left by his father some streets behind which not everyone knew but those who knew could not give up, before he moved to this 1927 made building restored by Armada… Sabahattin, got two times the cover subject of The New York Times in the first three months in the year 2000… Sabahattin, originally from Trilye (Mudanya, Zeytinbag), of a family which knows the sea, fish and the respect of fish very well, know continues to host his guest in summer as in winter in this wooden house… His sons are helping him… In summer some of the tables overflow the street.

Address: Cankurtaran Mh., Seyit Hasan Sk No:50, Fatih

Phone: (0212) 458 1824

SUNA ABLA

This humble seafood restaurant is very popular for its great food, wonderful views, moderate prices, and casual atmosphere. Located right next to the Kandilli İskelesi (the pier in Kandilli), Suna’nın Yeri has wooden tables and chairs right next to the water, offering fantastic views of the Bosphorus and the Faith Sultan Mehmet Bridge.

Phone: (0216) 332 32 41
Address: Iskele Caddesi No. 4-17 District: Kandilli

BORSAM

With the splendor of Bora Restaurant Adile Sultan Palace which started its business in catering sector in 1983 and Adile Sultan Palace Kandilli Borsa Restaurant where unique flavors of Borsa kitchen meets, welcome you in Cennet Terrace a capacity for 120 people in summer.

In winter closed area within the Saray is capable of welcoming with a capacity for 120 people.

Flavors from Turkish Kitchen and Local kitchens take place in the menu of Kandilli Borsa Restaurant. Borsa has created a Turkish Kitchen which did not lose its bond with the traditions in years and has a modern presentation, and also it makes researches about foods eaten in Adile Sultan era and kitchen culture, and presents the recipes with the palatal delight of our time and with modern presentation styles by making.

Restaurant has a special cellar built in the old palace vault with advanced technology for 500 bottles.
HAMDİ RESTAURANT

Hamdi Arpacı arrived in İstanbul in the 1960s and almost immediately established a street stand near the Spice Bazaar where he grilled and sold tasty kebaps made according to recipes from his hometown Urfa, in Turkey's southeast. His kebaps became so popular with locals that he soon acquired this nearby building, which has phenomenal views from its top-floor terrace.

A meal here offers views of the Old City, Golden Horn and Galata, as well as tasty food and a bustling atmosphere. Try the yoğurtlu şakşuka (yoghurt meze with fried eggplant, peppers and potato), the içli köfte (meatballs rolled in bulgur) and the lahmacun (thin, meat-topped pizza) followed by any of the kebaps and you'll leave replete and happy – extremely replete if you finish with the house-made baklava or künefe. Any place this good is always going to be busy, so make sure you book, and don't forget to request a rooftop table with a view (outside if the weather is hot). If you arrive early, you might be able to score one of these without booking.

One slight caveat: staff work hard and are clearly encouraged to turn tables over as fast as possible. Don't expect much in terms of personal service, and be prepared for little time between courses.

The restaurant is accessed via elevators in the ground-floor baklava shop.

KARAKÖY LOKANTASI

Address: Kemankeş Karamustafa Paşa Mh., Kemankeş Cd No:37, 34425 İstanbul

Phone:(0212) 292 4455

Tucked into the street behind the yet-to-be gentrified docks at Karaköy, among shops advertising boat tickets to Odessa and cubby-sized import and export offices, is the neighborhood's culinary port of call, Karaköy Lokantası. With great food, personable service and tasteful décor, this family-operated eatery defiantly proves that a good dining experience doesn't have to come with a shocker of a bill.
SELIM USTA

Hugely popular place for filling up on köfte/meatballs served with half loaves of bread and plates piyaz/white beans.

Address: Sultanahmet Koftecisi, Divan Yolu Cd No:4, Fatih

Phone:(0212) 511 39 60

KARAKÖY GÜLLÜĞLU BAKLAVA

We recommend satisfying the sweet tooth with some of the best baklava in town, right down the street at Güllüoğlu.

TO TRY

ŞİRA/ Slightly fermented grape juice.

It is an old turkish drink which is good with kebap.

A sour drink which is made by waiting grape juice. During this process, it is clarified and filtered out adding marl. Clear part is used as a drink.

SAHLEP

It is a popular hot drink in winter, which is made of pulverized orchid roots. A thick hot drink is obtained by boiling milk, sahlep and sugar together. It is served with cinnamon on top. It is good especially cold snowy nights while listening Istanbul.

SHERBETS

When drinks were being prepared at home about 50 or 60 years ago, lemon various types of fruit and then aromatic plants were added into these drinks. Sherbet which is preferred especially during summer used to be filled in special glass containers and ice would then be added in it. You should try our traditional grandmom’s sherbets in Park Café Restaurant.
TURKISH TEA

It is the most consumed drink in daily life. To have better taste, it is necessary to steep well.

TURKISH COFFEE

As a strong drink, Turkish coffee can be drunk with no sugar, little sugar, medium sugar or much sugar. The distinctive feature of it is that it is simmered, served in small porcelain cups with scum on top. You should see our turkish coffee presentation.

AIRAN

Prepared by mixing yoghurt and water, airan has got a sort in Anatolia which is prepared in yayık tool and pleasing to the eye due to the bubbles on top. It is very healthy especially for children instead of soft drinks in the market.

BOZA

Having 9000 years past, boza's main ingredients is semolina. The semolina is obtained by grinding millet and then it is boiled with water until it becomes very thick dough. After this thick dough has become cool, it is filtered out. This raw boza can be sweetened with sugar and fermented with special yeast. It is served with cinnamon and roasted chickpeas on top.

RAKI Alcoholic Drink

Named as Lion Milk, our national drink rakı is a very strong alcoholic drink. It is consumed adding water and with delicatessen.

KANYON

The Kanyon was designed as a place that highlights high life standards. Kanyon comprises of 4 floor.

It offers service with 160 shops, 9 cinema rooms, gourmet restaurants and cafes.

Address: Esentepe Mh., Büyükdere Cd No:185, Şişli Phone:(0212) 353 5300

AKMERKEZ
Akmerkez which was elected the best shopping center of Europe in 1995 is built on an area of 180 thousand meter squares. It has 246 shops, cinema and fast food restaurants.

Address: Akmerkez Tic. Merk. Nispetiye Cad No:107, Etisler, 80804 Istanbul
Phone: (0212) 282 0537

ISTINYE PARK

Istinye Park is a shopping center in the İstinye quarter of Istanbul, Turkey with 291 stores, 85,250 sqm of retail area, and four levels of underground parking. The center features both enclosed and open air sections.

İstinye Bayırı Cad.
No: 73 Sanyer
T: (212) 345 55 55

CEVAHIR

Cevahir which opened its door in 2005 in Şişli with 2,500m2. Three floors of the shopping centre are connected directly to the metro line.

Adresse: Büyükdere Caddesi no:22 Şişli

ZORLU CENTER AVM

The 105,000 square meter Zorlu Center Mall deftly combines indoor and outdoor space nestled in green areas flanked by water elements in a shopping emporium featuring 200 exclusive brands, some coming to Turkey for the first time.

Zorlu Center 34340 Beşiktaş, İstanbul Phone: 90 (212) 444 9496
HISTORIA

Address: Akşemseddin Mh., 34091 Fatih/Istanbul Province
Phone:(0212) 532 0202

TO HANGOUT

BABYLON

When it first opened, Babylon was Istanbul’s first proper black box music venue. Immediately it drew the likes of Depeche Mode to Istanbul, and this is still where acts such as Wild Beasts and Mulatu Astatke will play when they visit the city. Babylon’s programme is extremely diverse, and the atmosphere of its gigs varies accordingly – sometimes you can’t move for the elbows and knees, while when the best-known Turkish instrumentalists play here you’ll find an older crowd who often choose to sit on the floor in reverential silence.

• Şehbender Sokak 3, Asmalimescit, +90 212 292 7368, babylon.com.tr.

You could take babylon weekly program from the reception.

ANJELIQUE

Located on the shore of Bosphorus, it goes without saying that this three storey mansion offers a good view as well as a broad variety of food. The night club is located on the top floor. Some like the place for its music and some for the cocktails, while others go there for the trendy dynamic atmosphere.

Address: Muallim Naci cad. Salhane Sok. No:5 Ortaköy
Telephone: +90 212 327 28 44 – 45
www.anjelique.com.tr

BLACKK

Resto-lounge, Club and Levendiz Greek Tavern. One of them will surely satisfy you. Decorated in 18th century Rococo style with angling forms of modernism, in Resto-lounge you will experience “taste” in more than one sense. Modern and classic blends elegantly in the Club, where you can enjoy the Bosphorus view as well as 18th century paintings in a club spirit.

Address: Muallim Naci Cad. No:71 Ortaköy
Telephone: +90 212 236 72 56
www.blackk.net
SUADA

This night club actually plays in a league of their own, since SuAda is not located by the Bosphorus … but on an island in it!
Located 165 meters away from the European shore in Kuruçeşme the island was a present for Serkis Kalfa, the head architect of the Ottoman palace, by Sultan Abdülaziz in 1872. Serkis Kalfa built a three-storey mansion on the island and lived there until he died in 1899. After World War I the island was rented and used as a coal storehouse. In 1957 Galatasaray Sports Club bought the island and transformed it into a social facility.
Today, Suada is one of the top gear venues in Istanbul for glamorous events. Suada has a pool, a night club and six restaurants offering refined tastes ranging from sea food to Cretan, and from kebab to pasta.

Address: free (15 min.) boat trip from the Kuruçeşme shore.
Telephone: +90 212 263 73 00/33
www.suadaclub.com.tr

360

The venue is located in a penthouse of a 19th century apartment building with 360 degrees fascinating landscape views of the Bosphorus, Golden Horn and the Sea of Marmara. The place expresses itself with four elements: cuisine, design, entertainment and atmosphere. The club comes alive in the weekends, offering DJs and vocalists with live dancers and performances, and non-stop partying until the early morning hours.

Address: İstiklal Caddesi Msır Apt. Kat 8 No:311 Beyoğlu
Telephone: +90 212 251 1042-43
360istanbul.com

LIVING INDIGO

Indigo provides a mix of technology and minimalism. This 400 m² clubbing place can host about 600 people to experience a great night out. Even though Indigo focusses on simplicity, it offers a variety of spectacular light shows. The state-of-the-art sound system plus an awesome projection system creates a dynamic visual experience. Indigo is another great place to enjoy live music. Check out their website for details on who’s playing.

Address: İstiklal Cad. Akarsu Sk. No:1-2-4-5, Beyoğlu
Telephone: +90 212 244 85 67
www.livingindigo.com

JOLLY JOKER BALANS

A good option for the live music addicts since the construction was designed especially for live performances with a decor of “old pub design”. It is a good opportunity to experience Turkish rock, alternative and pop music from senior and fresh popular bands and singers.

Address: İstiklal Cad. Balo Sok. No: 22 Beyoğlu
Telephone : 0212 251 7020
www.jjistanbul.com

NARDIS JAZZ CLUB

Located near Galata Tower in lower Beyoğlu, Nardis features live jazz during the week from 21:30 to 00:30 and from 23:30-01:30 on weekends.
All interpretations of jazz including classic, modern, fusion, mainstream and ethnic, as well as solo artists performing. The club is unique in providing a stage for concerts in a club atmosphere.

Adress: Kuledibi Sok. No:14 Galata Istanbul
Tel: 0212 244 63 27 / 0532 244 57 78

TO EXPERIENCE

NARGILEM CAFE

A summer evening in Tophane is a quintessential Istanbul experience. Rather than one single destination bar, this street is rammed with lounge-style shisha (the Turks call it “nargileh”) cafes running into each other, with little to differentiate them other than the varying tenacity of the waiters trying to coax you in. Nargilem Cafe is as safe an option as any. Choice made, backgammon and tutti-frutti-scented smoke rings will see you through into the small hours. Sellers of fruit and fresh almonds on ice rove between the tables, but beware the peanut gimmick: if you even touch the nibbles waiting on the table when you arrive you might find an unexpected addition to your bill.

• Tophane Nargile Alani, Tophane Sali Pazari Sira Mağazalar 101, Beyoğlu, +90 212 244 2492,

ISTIKLAL STREET

The heartbeat of Istanbul, İstiklal in Beyoğlu is the embodiment of the city’s incomparable spirit. Once you jostle your way through the crowds past power suits, school uniforms, backpacks, cameras and guitars, take a breather by the Galatasaray High School’s gigantic gates and bask in the visual electricity and sounds that resonate from the throngs of pedestrians. Grab some roasted chestnuts in the fall or winter, or if it’s hot some Kahramanmaras ice-cream from a cheeky vendor, who’ll make you work for your cone. And be sure to roam into the sides streets – Küçük Parmakkapı Sokak is a haven where the sounds of live Turkish rock, dice hitting backgammon boards and the haze of sheesha smoke weave together.

KUMPIR AT ORTAKOY SHORE
Resting at the foot of the vast Bosphorus Bridge connecting Europe to Asia, most of the cobblestone pavements in this small enclave will lead you towards a strip of kumpir (baked, stuffed potatoes) stalls staffed by young men calling out to passersby. Grab a seat by the benches near the neo-Baroque Ortaköy Mosque facing the Bosphorus and feast on the most calorific potatoes in town.

**BAGDAT STREET**

Bagdat street is the heart of the Asian side of Istanbul. The lively part starts in Bostanci, across from the boat house and ends in Kiziltoprak, near Kadikoy. There are many shops, book stores, restaurants and side-walk cafes along the street. There might be nothing for the tourists here but, if you are curious about how people live on the Asian side of Istanbul, you may want to spend some time here before you take off to the Prince Islands from Bostanci. The part of the long avenue which has the most activity is between Caddebostan and Suadiye with cafes, gourmet restaurants and department stores.

**THE PRINCE ISLANDS**

The Prince Islands are a chain of nine islands off the coast of Istanbul, Turkey, in the Sea of Marmara. The islands also constitute the Adalar (literally Islands) district of Istanbul Province.

They consist of four larger islands, Büyükada ("Big Island") with an area of 5.46 km2 (2.11 sq mi), Heybeliada ("Saddlebag Island") with an area of 2.4 km2 (0.93 sq mi), Burgazada ("Fortress Island") with an area of 1.5 km2 (0.58 sq mi), Kınalıada ("Henna Island") with an area of 1.3 km2 (0.50 sq mi), and five much smaller ones, Sedef Adası ("Mother-of-Pearl Island") with an area of 0.157 km2 (0.061 sq mi), Yassıada ("Flat Island") with an area of 0.05 km2 (0.019 sq mi), Sivriada ("Sharp Island") with an area of 0.05 km2 (0.019 sq mi), Kaşık Adası ("Spoon Island") with an area of 0.006 km2 (0.0023 sq mi), and Tavşan Adası ("Rabbit Island") with an area of 0.004 km2 (0.0015 sq mi).


**BOSPHOROUS TOUR**

Along the Bosphorus, the strait that lies between the Sea of Marmara and the Black Sea, and separating Europe and Asia, lies a number of neighborhoods each with a different character palaces of the late Ottoman period, and parks. This is quite easily one of the most scenic parts of Istanbul, which reaches its zenith during late spring (especially in early May), when the Judas trees (Turkish: Erguvan, Latin: Cercis siliquastrum), which are some sort of symbol of the Bosphorus and dotting the hills along the Bosphorus, are in full bloom of their deep-pink flowers that engulf both shores of the strait.

Şehir Hatları is Istanbul’s official ferry company. It offers three great Bosphorus tours: Short Circle Bosphorus Cruise, Full Bosphorus Cruise and the Full Bosphorus Cruise by Night. Unfortunately, the availability of these tours change according to the season. So do keep on reading and check out the respective links for the most up-to-date departure times.

Şehir Hatları Bosphorus lines sales offices are located on the left docks of Eminönü when coming off the Galata Bridge.

- Short Circle Bosphorus Cruise (Kısa Boğaz Turu)
First up is the brand new non-stop Short Circle Bosphorus tour. This one is great for people who are pressed for time but don’t want to miss a genuine Bosphorus experience. This tour is available every day in summer time (April 1st until October 31st). The cruise takes you from Eminönü to Istinye (well past the second bridge that is), and back. The ferry leaves the Eminönü docks at 14:30, arrives at Ortaköy around 14:50 to pick up more people, and then continues its two hour non-stop tour.

- Full Bosphorus Cruise (Uzun Boğaz Turu)

The Full Bosphorus Tour offers a great Bosphorus experience and will take several hours in total. This cruise will take you from Eminönü all the way to the Black Sea, and back. Each way takes about 90 minutes since the ferry makes 5 short stops to let people on and off. You must get off the ferry in Anadolu Kavağı, the last harbor before the Black Sea. This gives you the opportunity to grab a (late) lunch in one of the town’s fish restaurants located on the shore and/or visit the fortress.

The ferry does a few complete tours a day, so check the official schedule with the latest timetables. On board you can use digital guides explaining over 70 points of interest along the way, in 10 different languages (Turkish, English, German, French, Spanish, Italian, Japanese, Russian, Persian, and Arabic).

- Full Bosphorus Cruise by Night (Mehtap Gezi)

It offers the exact same tour as the regular Full Bosphorus Tour, but you get to see Istanbul at night! The ferry leaves before dusk providing great Istanbul sunset views. It again stops in Anadolu Kavağı for a bit over two hours so people can enjoy dinner in the fish restaurants at the shore. Around 22:30 the ferry departs again for a moonlight cruise on the Bosphorus — a unique experience. Unfortunately, the Full Bosphorus Tour by Night is only available on Saturdays in July and August.


TO DELIGHT

ISTANBUL MODERN MUSEUM 4.2KM

This huge former warehouse on the shores of the Bosphorus is the most prominent of Istanbul’s contemporary galleries. It is arguably the reason why so many smaller spaces have sprung up in the neighbourhood, and the Biennale is held next door. A permanent exhibition takes visitors through a history of modern Turkish art and there are increasingly important international shows, such as portraitist Steve McCurry’s photos from the last ever roll of Kodachrome film. But you sometimes have to wonder if the main attraction for many is really the restaurant, and its incredible view of the old city across the water.

- Meclis-i Mebusan Caddesi, Liman İşletmeleri, Sahasi Antrepo 4, Karaköy, +90 212 334 73 00, istanbulmodern.org, Open Tue-Sun 10:00am-18:00pm, Thur closes 20:00pm
The seeds for the İstanbul Modern project were sown in 1987, during the 1st International Contemporary Art Exhibition, known today as the International Istanbul Biennial. Motivated by the interest shown in the event and the dynamism it contributed to the Istanbul art scene, Dr. Nejat F. Eczacibaşı embarked on the project to endow Istanbul with a permanent Museum of Contemporary Art.

The İstanbul Museum of Modern Art, Turkey’s first private museum to organize modern and contemporary art exhibitions, was founded in 2004 and occupies an 8,000 square meter site on the shores of the Bosphorus. The Chair of the Board of Directors is Oya Eczacibaş. Istanbul Modern embraces a global vision to collect, preserve, exhibit and document works of modern and contemporary art and make them accessible to art lovers.

As part of its commitment to sharing Turkey’s artistic creativity with wide audiences and promoting its cultural identity in the international art world, İstanbul Modern hosts a broad array of interdisciplinary activities.

Apart from permanent and temporary exhibition galleries, a photography gallery, and spaces for educational and social programs, the museum offers a cinema, restaurant, design store and an extensive library.

PERA MUSEUM 3.7KM

The main collection might consist of Orientalist paintings, old weights and Ottoman tiles, but modern art fans should keep an eye on the Pera’s top-notch travelling exhibitions by the likes of Picasso, Botero and Chagal. You experience the shows from top to bottom, working your way downwards over several floors of bright, white, well-polished museum space. Opening nights bring out paparazzi and camera crews, and the regular screenings of classic foreign films have as much style, romance and class as the converted Victorian hotel building and its
The Pera Museum, which opened its doors in early June 2005, is the first step of a comprehensive cultural endeavor that the Suna and İnan Kıraç Foundation launched to provide cultural services on a variety of levels. An historic al structure which was originally constructed in 1893 by the architect Achille Manoussos in Tepebaşı (İstanbul’s most prestigious district in those days) and which was, until rather recently, known as the Bristol Hotel, was completely renovated to serve as a museum and cultural center for the project. Transformed into a fully-equipped modern museum, this venerable building is now serving the people of İstanbul once again.

The first and second floors of the Pera Museum house three permanent collections belonging to the Suna and İnan Kıraç Foundation, with the Sevgi and Erdoğan Gönül Gallery on the second floor. The third, fourth, and fifth floors are devoted to multipurpose exhibition spaces which have included exhibitions of works by Marc Chagall and Frida Kahlo among others.

The Suna and İnan Kıraç Foundation’s collection of Orientalist art consists of more than three hundred paintings. This rich collection brings together important works by European artists inspired by the Ottoman world from the 17th century to the early 19th. This collection, which presents a vast visual panorama of the last two centuries of the Ottoman Empire, includes works by Osman Hamdi, regarded by art historians as the genre’s only “native Orientalist” and of course his most famous painting, The Tortoise Trainer. Many paintings from the private collections of the late Sevgi and Erdoğan Gönül have also entered the foundation’s permanent collection.
In addition to its function as a private museum in which to display the collection of the Foundation, the Pera Museum is also intended to provide the people of Istanbul with a broad range of cultural services as a modern cultural center located in a vibrant part of the city and equipped with multipurpose exhibition spaces, an auditorium and Pera Education room, and activity spaces for visitors.

SANTRAL ISTANBUL

In surroundings more green than Tophane and more peaceful than Beyoğlu, the gallery at Santral is a good bet for a cultural pit-stop on a boat trip up the Golden Horn. The curators put together exhibitions on eclectic international subjects, from German architecture to Italian design and Colombian contemporary art, with the focus switching occasionally to subjects taught at Bilgi University, which occupies most of this enormous converted Ottoman power station. In daylight, the steel and glass cuboid blocks that make up the gallery space are dark and imposing from the outside, but at night, illuminated, they come to life.

• Eski Silahtarağa Elektrik Santrali, Kazim Karabekir Caddesi 2, Eyüp 34060, +90 212 311 7878,

SAKIP SABANCI

Open Tuesday-Wednesday-Saturday-Sunday 10:00am-18:00pm, Wednesday-Friday closes 20:00pm.

Monday is closed

The Sakıp Sabancı Museum Collection of the Arts of the Book and Calligraphy consists of illuminated Korans, prayer books, calligraphic compositions, albums and panels written by well-known calligraphers, illuminated official documents bearing the imperial cipher of the Ottoman sultans as well as calligrapher’s tools, all produced during a period extending from the end of the 14th century to the 20th century. Sakıp Sabancı (d. 2004) started collecting primarily calligraphic works and illuminated Korans in the 1970s. From 1989 onwards the collection was exhibited in major museums abroad. The keen interest attracted by these exhibitions cemented Sakıp Sabancı and his family’s resolve to further enlarge the collection and encouraged the idea of founding a museum.

In 1998 the family mansion was handed over to Sabancı University for the purpose of converting it into a museum, and in 2002, with the addition of a modern gallery, the Sabancı University Sakıp Sabancı Museum opened to the public. The exhibition spaces were enlarged in 2005, all within international technical standards. Today, the Sakıp Sabancı Museum exhibits the Arts of the Book and Calligraphy Collection using current
technical innovations, and with this innovative stand aims to inform the younger generation about this traditional art.

The museum also houses the Sakıp Sabancı Painting Collection, comprising of select examples of early Turkish painting as well as the works of foreign artists who worked in Istanbul during the later years of the Ottoman Empire. The collection is focused primarily on works created between 1850 and 1950, and in addition to works by Raphael and local artists such as Konstantin Kapıdağlı, Osman Hamdi Bey, Şeker Ahmed Paşa, Süleyman Seyyid, Nazmi Ziya Güran, İbrahim Çaliş, Feyhanan Duran and Fikret Mualla, also includes the works of foreign artists like Fausto Zonaro and Ivan Ayvazovski.

The Sakıp Sabancı Museum Collection of Archaeological and Stone pieces is composed of works that have come down to us from Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman eras, and is exhibited in the garden of the Museum.

SADBERK HANIM MUSEUM

Open everyday 10:00am-17:00pm, Wednesday is closed

Sadberk Hanım Museum opened on 14 October 1980 as Turkey’s first private museum, established by the Vehbi Koç Foundation to exhibit the private collection of Sadberk Koç, the wife of Vehbi Koç. Today the museum holds over 18,000 items in its Turkish Islamic and archaeological collections.

The museum gives priority to collecting outstanding examples of Ottoman period works. In particular its collections of İznik tiles and ceramics and Ottoman period women’s costume and embroidery rank among the best in the world. The museum collections continue to grow rapidly, with the addition of donations and objects purchased both in Turkey and abroad.
As well as archaeological and early Islamic period items, Sadberk Hanım Museum gathers the finest examples of works of art ranging from calligraphy to silk fabrics produced over the six centuries of the Ottoman Empire. Preserving these as a cultural legacy for future generations is one of the museum’s principal objectives. The museum also aims to acquaint the general public with this legacy through its permanent exhibitions, temporary exhibitions, publications and educational programmes. In keeping with contemporary museumship, the museum sees its role as an educational and cultural institution that ensures museum visits are both informative and enjoyable and contributes to society’s artistic and scientific achievement.

TO GET EXCITED

GRAND BAZAAR

Constructed in 1461, the Grand Bazaar, boasting 5,000 shops, is one of the largest covered markets in the world. Once a vibrant hub of international and local trade, recent decades have seen this labyrinth of glittering delights win the hearts, minds and wallets of wide-eyed tourists in search of the ultimate oriental shopping experience. With beckoning sellers peddling exquisite textiles, pottery, spices, jewellery, lanterns and souvenirs, bartering is an absolute must. However, resist the urge to entertain small boys wielding spinning tops on strings, who will address you as “mother”, regardless of age – and, occasionally, gender. At the end of the day, if it gets a bit too bizarre, 22 ancient gateways offer ample escape routes.

• The Bazaar is closed Sundays; All working days and Saturdays it is open between 08:30-19:30.

Divanyolu Caddesi 42, Sultanahmet
GALATA TOWER

Watery Istanbul is a city that cries out to be viewed from on high, and you can get a bird's-eye view of everything from the balcony at the top of the Galata Tower in Beyoğlu, the modern part of old Istanbul that, in pre-Republican days, was home to the city's foreign residents. Built in 1348, the tower once formed part of a sub-city belonging to the Genoese that stretched right down to the Bosphorus. In a footnote to aviation history, it was from this tower that Hezârfen Ahmed Çelebi flew across the Bosphorus from Europe to Asia in 1638, thus inaugurating the first ever intercontinental flight.

• galatatower.net, +90 212 293 8180, entrance TL 10. Open 09:00am-19:00pm

TOPKAPI PALACE

If there is one absolute must-see in Istanbul, it has to be the Topkapi Palace, home to generations of sultans and their wives, who were closeted in the famous harem. A collection of lush green courtyards and delicate kiosks, the Topkapi boasts a treasury to put the crown jewels in the shade, as well as views to die for over the Sea of Marmara, Bosphorus and Golden Horn. The secretive harem – really just the family quarters – is a warren of lushly-tiled rooms wrapped round a gem of a Turkish bath. Try to visit on a day when no cruise ship is in town to avoid the worst of the crowds

• Sultanahmet, +90 212 512 0480, topkapisarayi.gov.tr, TL20 (£7). Open Tue-Sun 9am-6pm (harem 9am-5pm)

PS: How to get there; Take the tram to Sultanahmet and walk around Aya Sofya to the main entrance.
AYA SOFYA

After decades in which scaffolding cluttered the interior of Emperor Justinian's sixth-century Byzantine masterpiece, the thrill of being able to experience the extraordinary spaciousness of this famous church-turned-mosque-turned museum is hard to overstate. Downstairs the building is largely empty; the best of the glittering mosaics lurk in the galleries upstairs. Newly opened are the tombs of several early Ottoman sultans and their slaughtered sons – before primogeniture new sultans immediately had all potential rivals killed. Before the end of the year, the city's finest carpets will go on display in the soup kitchen added after the church was turned into a mosque.

• Aya Sofya, Sultanahmet Square, +90 212 522 0989, hagiasophia.com, entrance TL25. Open 09:00am-18:00pm. Monday is closed.

BLUE MOSQUE

Facing Hagia Sophia across a small park and mirroring its domed silhouette, the early 17th-century Blue Mosque is one of only a handful of mosques in the world to boast six minarets. Is it really blue? Well, not noticeably, although all the walls are papered with fine İznik tiles. To view it as the architect, Sedefkar Mehmed Aga, originally intended, enter via what looks like the side entrance from the Hippodrome. Afterwards, pop your head into a building the size of a small mosque on the corner of the complex. This houses the tomb of Sultan Ahmed I, the man who gave his name to both the mosque and the neighbourhood.

• Sultanahmet Square, bluemosque.org*. Open outside prayer times
The city’s most unexpectedly romantic attraction, the Basilica Cistern, offers an insight into the complicated system that once brought drinking water into Istanbul from Thrace (an area of the south-east Balkans now constituting Turkish land in the European mainland, and a chunk of Bulgaria). Constructed in the sixth century and then forgotten for centuries, the cistern that once stored the water has been fitted with lights and music. Fish flitter around the bases of the 336 columns that support the ceiling. Don’t miss the upside-down head of Medusa that forms the bottom of one column, proof that Byzantine builders saw Roman relics as little more than reusable rubble.

• Yerebatan Caddesi 13, +90 212 522 1259, yerebatan.com,, Open everyday 09:00am-19.30pm

ISTANBUL ARCHAEOLOGY MUSEUM

Walk to Istanbul’s three-in-one equivalent of the British Museum via the grounds of Topkapi Palace or through Gulhane Park. If time is tight, go straight to the large porticoed building housing the glorious sarcophagus of Alexander which depicts scenes from the life of Alexander the Great in vivid 3D. Kids will love the model Trojan Horse in the children’s section. Then pop into the lovely Tiled Pavilion, one of the city’s oldest Ottoman structures, beautifully restored to show off its finest ceramics. Finally, catch a glimpse of a peace treaty from 1269 BC preserved in the part of the museum nearest to the gate.

• Osman Hamdi Bey Yokuşu, Gulhane Park, +90 212 520 7740, entrance £3.50. Open Tue-Sun, 9am-6pm (May-Sep), 9am-4pm (Oct-Apr)
SULEYMANIYE MOSQUE

Unmissable as you stand on the busy Galata bridge and look up at the city’s historic skyline is the mosque designed by the great Ottoman architect Sinan for Suleiman the Magnificent. Newly restored to its original splendour, it is generally regarded as the finest of the 42 surviving mosques he designed for Istanbul. Unusually, it retains much of the original complex of social service buildings that came attached to it, including several madrasahs, a hospital, a library and a hamam. Locals come here to eat kuru fasuliye, the Turkish take on baked beans, in a street once haunted by opium addicts.

• Professor Siddik Sami Onar Caddesi. Open outside prayer times

CHORA CHURCH

It’s a bit of a schlep to get there but the restored Chora Church in the old city walls offers a stunning glimpse of late Byzantine splendour, its walls and ceilings adorned with glittering mosaics and breath-taking frescoes. Like Hagia Sophia, it has made the journey from Byzantine church to Ottoman mosque and then to modern museum, and now stands in a neighbourhood of restored Ottoman wooden houses, prettily painted in pastel colours. Before you go back to your hotel, take a look at the nearby walls that ringed old Constantinople and date back to the fifth century.

• Kariye Camii Sokak 26, +90 212 631 9241, entrance £4.50. Open Thu-Tue 9am-6pm (Apr-Sep), 9am-4.30pm (Oct-Mar)
A short walk from the Grand Bazaar, the 17th-century Eminönü Egyptian Spice Bazaar, open seven days a week, is another favourite of the camera-wielding, souvenir-seeking tourist. A bustling gastronomic paradise since 1664, this is the best place to pick up dried fruits and nuts, spices, olives, Turkish delight, oils and essences of the finest order. Bronze curios glint in the sun, torpedo-sized dates are stacked to the rafters, and the decadent scent of freshly ground Mehmet Efendi coffee merges with the aroma of fresh fish, with surprisingly non-toxic consequences. Marriage proposals should only be entertained if they involve free Turkish delight.

• Sururi Mahellesi, Fathi

**OBELISK OF THEODOSIUS**

The Obelisk of Theodosius is the Ancient Egyptian obelisk of Pharaoh Tutmoses III re-erected in the Hippodrome of Constantinople by the Roman emperor Theodosius I in the 4th century AD.

Address: Binbirdirek Mh., 34122 Fathi/Istanbul Province

Phone: (0212) 518 1021

**BOZDOGAN ARCH**

The Bozdogan Arch is a Roman aqueduct which was the major water-providing system of the Eastern Roman capital of Constantinople (modern Istanbul, Turkey). Completed by Roman Emperor Valens in the late 4th century AD, it was restored by several Ottoman Sultans, and is one of the most important landmarks of the city.

The aqueduct stands in Istanbul, in the quarter of Fathi, and spans the valley between the hills occupied today by the Istanbul University and the Fatih Mosque. The surviving section is 921 metres long, about 50 metres less than the original length.[1] The Atatürk Bulvari boulevard passes under its arches.
ISTANBUL AQUARIUM

Istanbul Aquarium (İstanbul Akvaryum) is a public aquarium in Istanbul, Turkey. It opened its doors in April 2011, is an official member of World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA). The site is 5 km from Atatürk International Airport, near the motorway and railway transportation systems in Florya, which is at the southwest coast of Istanbul.

Istanbul Aquarium holds a leading position among worldwide aquariums thanks to its volume, variety of fish species, and the activities on travel routes. Visitors follow a geographical route that includes 16 themes and 1 rainforest going from the Black Sea towards the Pacific. The aquarium was designed by public aquarium design consultants OCEAN Projects.

All living creatures in Istanbul Aquarium continue to live in the conditions as nearest as possible to those of their habitat.