

✚ ISTANBUL



ISTANBUL, the unique city where the continents meet each other!

As the consequence of its superb location on the strait of Bosphorus, Istanbul had been the Capital of both the Romans, and following them the Ottoman Turks. Today with its economic, and social dynamics Istanbul is the very heart of modern Turkey, where you will easily notice that it is a "city that never sleeps".



Hearing the chime of church bells, which harmoniously mingles with the prayer call of the mosques, will make you comprehend how charming a cultural and religious mosaic you are a part of. The fascinating skyline of the domes, and minarets that are framed by the twinkling skyscrapers clearly proves the fact that it is here Oriental way of life blends with the Western one.

▣ Hagia Sophia



Having been built in 6th century by Justinian the Great, this majestic basilica is still one of the most outstanding examples of architecture with its massive dome resting at the height of 180 ft from its floor. What St. Peter's is for the world of Catholicism, had been Hagia Sophia for the Orthodox Church for over nine hundred years. With its Medieval mosaics it maintains its mystic modesty, though it was built about a millennia earlier than that of St. Paul's of London and St. Peter's of Rome.

▣ Blue Mosque



Sultan Ahmet was the name of the Ottoman Emperor who got it built, and named it after himself as Sultan Ahmet Mosque. It is the western travelers that name it as Blue Mosque because of the dominant color of its quartz tiles. Since its date of construction, 1616 A.D., it keeps its title as the only mosque with six minarets on earth.

▣ Topkapi Palace



Ottoman Empire, having been founded in 1299 A.D. by the Turkish feudal lord Osman, for many centuries was ruled from this mystic palace which took the breath of the western ambassadors, and it sure will dazzle your eyes too with its Royal Treasury. Built just after the conquest of Istanbul in 1453 A.D., its Harem was added during the reign of Suleyman the Magnificent in sixteen hundreds. Today this oriental palace, functions as a museum with many belongings of the Sultans, from jewelry to tiles, and it will constitute a major place in your mind among all the other monuments of Istanbul.

▣ **St. Saviour in Chora**



The size of this glorious church contradicts with its internal beauty expressed in the most flamboyant taste. The mural gold plated mosaics are known to be among the earliest samples of Renaissance and are in a perfect state of preservation.

▣ **Museum Of Islamic
& Turkish Arts**



Having been the mansion of son-in-law of Sultan Suleyman the Magnificent, it was built in 16th century. Today it houses a fascinating collection of calligraphy, tile works, and the world's most extensive Oriental Antique Carpet collection, including very rare ones like Usak Rugs of 16th century. It also has a section where nomadic life of Turkish Tribes is depicted to give you a different taste and perspective during your tour of the museum.