

dried herbs, spices, and other foodstuffs. Located at Cami Meydani Sok, open 8:00 am – 7:00 pm Monday through Saturday.

#### Malls

Akmerkez in Etiler is an ultramodern skyscraper where, besides branches of almost all the leading Turkish fashion companies, outlets for famous international names can be found.

Galleria, next to the yacht marina in Atakoy, also offers a wide range of well-known clothing stores.

Carousel, close to Galleria in Bakirkoy, is a smaller mall that has branches of various foreign stores including Levis and Benetton.

Some tourist oriented stores may accept U.S. Dollars. Most stores, restaurants, and hotels accept all major credit cards.

Regulations and conditions governing the refund of VAT are subject to change, and Royal Caribbean cannot guarantee the cooperation of local authorities.

**LOCAL CURRENCY** The unit of currency in Turkey is the new Turkish Lira (YTL). Notes are now available in the following denominations; 100, 50, 20, 10, 5, 1 and coins of 5, 10, 50 and 100.

Major currencies can be changed at the numerous banks, exchange offices, shops and hotels. Rates for cash are better than for traveler’s cheques. Major foreign currencies and credit cards are widely accepted.

**OFFICE/TELEPHONE FACILITIES** The main PTT (Posta Telgraf Office) Offices in Istanbul are usually open Monday to Saturday from 8:30 am – 5:30 pm. The PTT offers the following services: stamps, long distance telephones, phone cards, telegrams, facsimiles, etc. A PTT Office is located in the port terminal building.

AT&T: 0811.288.0001

MCI: 0811.288.0012

Pay phones may require a phone card for access to the above numbers.

To call the U.S. from Istanbul, dial 00 International access + 1 (U.S. country code) + area code + local number.

**TOURIST INFORMATION** The Ministry of Tourism Office is located at the Karakoy Yolcu Salonu (Karakoy International Maritime Passenger Terminal).

**TRANSPORTATION** There are a limited number of taxis available at the pier and most will accept U.S. Dollars. There is a bus and train system within the city that is fairly easy and modern.

It is approximately 4 km from the ship to Istanbul’s historical area and Grand Bazaar.

#### USEFUL WORDS

- Hello • Merhaba
- Goodbye • Hoşçakalin
- How are you? • Nasilsiniz?
- Thank you • Tesekkür ederim
- You’re welcome • Bir sey degil
- Yes • Evet
- No • Hayir
- How much is this? • Bu kaç lira?

#### NOTES

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## PORT EXPLORER & SHOPPING GUIDE

# Istanbul TURKEY

**GENERAL INFORMATION** Founded six centuries before Christ as Byzantium, re-founded in 330 AD as Constantinople, and conquered by the Ottomans in 1453, Istanbul was the great eastern European imperial capital for almost 16 centuries.

Today Istanbul is Turkey’s largest city, its busiest port, and the country’s center for business, banking, commerce, culture and the arts. Even though Ankara is Turkey’s modern capital, Istanbul holds its heart. In this old city you can tramp the streets where crusaders and janissaries once marched; admire mosques which are the most sublime architectural expressions of Islamic piety; peer into the sultan’s harem; and hunt for souvenirs and bargains in the 4,000 shops of the Grand Bazaar.

Turkey’s 67 million people are predominately Turks with a large minority of Muslim Kurds, Jews, Greeks, Armenians, Laz and Arabs. Although there is no official state religion, about 99% of Turks are Muslim. Orthodox Christians of Greek, Armenian and Syrian background, as well as Jews (mainly in Istanbul) comprise the other 1%.

Turkey is the meeting of the East and West. Istanbul is the only city on earth, which is located on two continents, both Europe and Asia. The Bosphorus, the strait that connects the Black Sea and the Seas of Marmara separates both continents. The Bosphorus Bridge is the fourth longest bridge in the world and was completed in 1973. This was the first physical link over the strait that connected Europe and Asia. Visitors entering Turkey from the mouth of the Bosphorus strait will have the unique privilege of viewing both the European and Asian shores.

Known to its ancient inhabitants as simply “The

City”, it remained enclosed within its mighty walls for 1,500 years. However, within the last half-century it has grown ferociously, spreading westward beyond the airport, northward almost to the Black Sea and eastward deep into Anatolia. This growth has mirrored the country’s own as Turkey assumes its place as the economic powerhouse of the eastern Mediterranean.

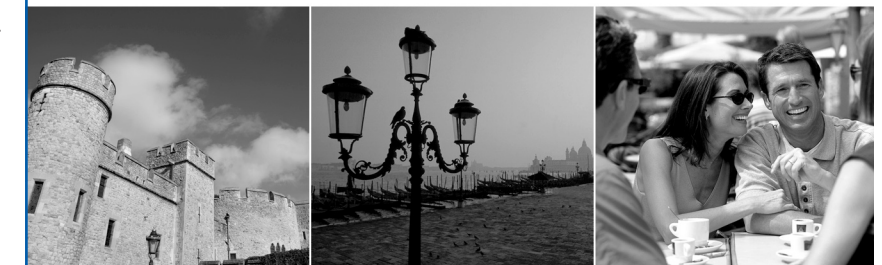
**HISTORY** Turkey is a mixture of civilizations and the joining of many historic events. It is believed that the first human settlements of Turkey date back to 10,000 B.C. Archeologists have uncovered ancient artifacts that support this theory, and have determined that the first settlements were that of ancient fishing villages.

The Megarian hero, Byzas, founded a Byzantium settlement around 657 BC and led a crusade of colonists from Greece to create a new city on the Bosphorus. This Greek state, however, was subject to the authority of Rome. The Byzantine Empire remained for over a thousand years.

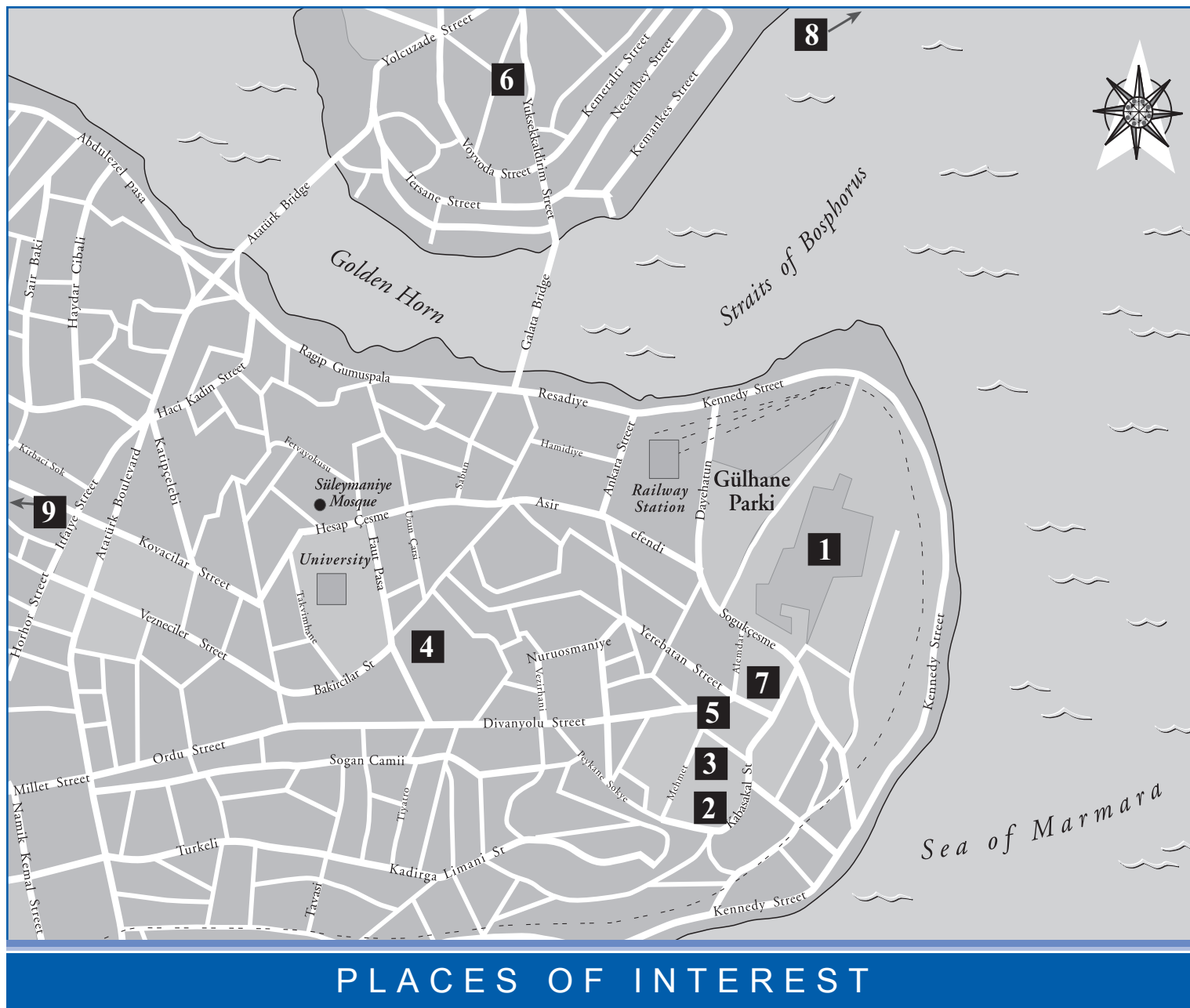
The City of Constantine was established in 330 AD. Constantine the Great claimed the Byzantine Empire for his own when he decided to move the capital of the Roman Empire from Rome. The old Greek city of Byzantium was reconstructed in order to create a city of a much grander scale. Constantinople in-turn would become the capital of the world for more than a thousand years.

The Conquest of Constantinople in 1453 was the end of the

*continued over*



## Celebrity X Cruises®



## PLACES OF INTEREST

Byzantine era and the beginning of the Ottoman reign. The Conquest became known as the victory for Istanbul. Mehmet II was responsible for the great battle and conquering of Constantinople, which then became the capital of the Ottoman Turkish Empire, and renamed Istanbul.

By 1918, the Ottomans lost almost all control of their European and Asian territories within their vast empire, with the exception of Istanbul. Later, the Treaty of Versailles, signed in 1923, established the current boundaries of Turkey that are currently in place today.

### PLACES OF INTEREST

**1** The **Topkapi Palace** for over three centuries has served as the grand palace for the Ottoman Sultans. The palace was built on the shores of the Bosphorus. Constructed after the Conquest of Constantinople in 1453, it is now a museum. The imperial palace houses the popular Harem, where the private

quarters Mehmet IV. Among the many jewels and precious stones that the Imperial Treasury holds, it is inclusive of an uncut emerald weighing approximately over 7 pounds (3.26 kg), the pearl-studded throne, and the golden Topkapi dagger.

**2** The **Blue Mosque** is known to architects as one of the great marvels of the world. It is called the Blue Mosque because its interior gleams with a magnificent paneling of blue and white tiles, which are enhanced by the reflection of the sun. It was built between 1603 – 1617 on the orders of Sultan Ahmet I. It houses a series of magnificent domes, Byzantine ivory work, beautifully decorated tiles and six distinctive minarets, which no other mosque in Istanbul possesses. The decor of this mosque is classic Ottoman style and design.

**3** The **Hippodrome** (an ancient Roman stadium) was built in 198 AD by the Emperor Septimius Sererus. Numerous chariot races took place here. The races were known to have political and military implications. The Hippodrome was the

center of the Byzantium era for over a 1,000 years.

**4** The **Grand Bazaar** is one of the most famous markets in the world. Its official name in Turkey is Kapali Carsi, and it is also known as the covered market. The Grand Bazaar was constructed shortly after the Conquest of Constantinople at the command of Faith Mehmet. Today it houses over 4,000 shops, with an enormous variety of goods.

**5** **Basilica Cistern** also known as the Yerebatan Sarayi or the Underground Palace is not a basilica but a Byzantine cistern (underground reservoir). It is 70 m (230 feet) wide and 140 m (459 feet) long and the fine brick vaulting is supported by 336 columns.

**6** The **Galata Tower** is believed to have been constructed in approximately 1348. Now a major tourist attraction, this ancient bastion was added as reinforcement for the defensive walls designed to protect it in the event of an enemy attack. The tower, a massive cone shaped structure was built at approximately 38 m (115 feet) above sea level, and rises to a height of 72 m (220 feet) above its base. There is an amazing view from the tower that encompasses this ancient city.

**7** **Hagia Sophia Museum** (Aya Sofya in Turkish) was originally a basilica created at the command of the Emperor Justinian during 532 to 537. This basilica was known to archeologists as a Theodosian Church. After the Conquest of Constantinople in 1453, the Ottomans converted the basilica into a mosque and then in 1932, Hagia Sophia was converted into a museum. It is renowned for its Byzantine Mosaic decor, the enormous wooden plaques with the sacred names of Islam inscribed, massive pillars, and at one time hosted the largest dome in the ancient world.

**8** **Beylerbeyi Palace**, situated on the Asian side of the Bosphorus, was built by Sultan Abdul Aziz in the 19th century. It possesses a beautiful garden with magnolia trees. It was used as a summer residence of the Ottoman Sultans and a great house for visiting foreign dignitaries and heads of state.

**9** **Kariye Museum** ( is the 11th century church of St. Saviour in Chora. The church is one of the most important Byzantine monuments in Istanbul. The walls of the church are decorated with magnificent 14th century frescoes and mosaics on a gold background. The walls illustrate scenes from the life of Jesus Christ and the Virgin Mary. The Chora Church represents the last golden age of Byzantine.

**SHORE EXCURSIONS** To make the most of your visit to Istanbul we suggest you take one of our organized Shore Excursions. For further information, consult your Shore Excursion brochure or contact the Shore Excursion Desk.

**LOCAL CUSTOMS** Bargaining: Some shops in the Grand Bazaar may be prepared to bargain.

Tipping: Some places will automatically add a service charge

(servis ücreti) of 10% or 15% to your bill, but this does not absolve you from the tip, oddly enough. The service charge goes into the pocket of the owner. Turks will give around 5% to the waiter directly and perhaps the same amount to the maître d'hotel. If service is included, the bill may say servis dahil (service included). Still, a small tip is expected. Turks don't tip taxi drivers, though they often round up the metered fare to a convenient amount.

**Local Cuisine:** Its worth travelling to Turkey just to eat. Turkish cuisine is the very heart and soul of eastern Mediterranean cooking, which demands fresh ingredients and careful preparation. The ingredients are often simple but of high quality. Fish (especially in the Aegean region), soups, rice dishes and stews feature predominantly on Turkish menus. Pistachios, almonds, dried apricots, and raisins are served as snacks throughout the day and are also common ingredients in Turkish cuisine.

**Local drink:** When dining, Turks like to drink raki, a strong (87% proof) anise-flavored drink. They rarely drink it straight, mixing it half-and-half with water, when it turns milky white. Most restaurants have a wide selection of wine (sarap). The most drinkable brand of wine is Kavaklıdere, whose white wine is labeled Çankaya and the red Yakut. There are two brands of bottled beer, Tuborg and Efes which can occasionally be found on tap. Soft drinks include Fruko, a lemon drink, as well as Coca-Cola and Pepsi Cola. They also drink ayran, a kind of liquid yogurt, which goes very well with Turkish foods. All Turkish meals end with coffee served in a small cup with varying amounts of sugar. Bottled water is recommended.

**Dress:** A strict dress code is enforced when visiting many of the religious sites and mosques in Istanbul. Short pants, tank tops and revealing clothing are not acceptable. Women should have their head, arms and shoulders covered.

**SHOPPING FACILITIES** Istanbul's shops and markets, crowded and noisy most times of the day, sell a colorful mixture of goods from all over the world. The city's most famous shopping center is the Grand Bazaar, and there are many other bazaars and markets to browse around. Turkey is a center of textile production, and Istanbul has a wealth of carpet and fashion boutiques. If you prefer to do all your shopping under one roof, head for one of the city's shopping malls that offer a variety of international and Turkish brand goods. Be wary of imitations of famous brand products wherever you shop.

**Grand Bazaar** The largest market in the world, the Grand Bazaar contains about 4,000 shops. In this roofed labyrinth of passages you can find every commodity associated with Turkey, from jewelry to carpets. It has operated for hundreds of years.

**Spice Bazaar** The Spice Bazaar is an exotic trading house for