Turkey is a unique geography. It is a bridge connecting not only East and West, but also the past and the future. Istanbul, the country’s cultural capital, has been an attractive settlement for various civilizations since ancient times. Today, the city is visited each year by millions of travelers who come to catch a glimpse of its ancient city walls, enchanted churches, palaces and mosques, while savoring the delightful tastes of the city’s rich cuisine. Istanbul offers an unforgettable experience with its colorful daily life and dynamic nightlife. It is also an attractive destination for international meetings with its world class accommodation and convention facilities.
İSTANBUL: LEADING CONGRESS DESTINATION

Istanbul hosted many important and large scale international congresses and events within the last decade and became a preferred destination for international congresses. Consequently, Istanbul's worldwide ranking in the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA) international association meeting statistics rose from 40th in 2000 to 17th in 2009 by the number of international association meetings held.

Moreover, the number of participants attending international meetings also increased, placing the city to the 4th place in the world according to 2009 ICCA statistics. Along with developments in the meeting industry, the number of foreign visitors to Istanbul reached 6,960,980 in 2010.

This continuing trend of growth, particularly in light of the current challenging economic climate, underlines the appeal of Istanbul as a conference tourism destination and the unique value the city's cultural mosaic and eight millennia of history offer meeting planners. Istanbul is increasing its appeal for the international meeting industry each year as a result of its growing importance for international trade and commerce, constantly improving infrastructure, international networking and the active involvement of national associations, corporations and universities. The valuable contribution of the meeting industry in economic, social and scientific developments of the destinations has been realized and appreciated by both public and private sectors. Therefore, support from these sectors has grown considerably. Today, Istanbul is one of the world's most popular, trendy and ever-evolving meeting destinations and the city grows with further developments and investments in all parts of economic, academic, cultural and social life.

The city's meeting infrastructure is expanding to meet the increasing potential and demands of international congresses and the city's reputation in the market. Istanbul Congress Center (ICC) opened its doors for IMF World Bank Meeting in October 2009 and increased the capacity of the Congress
Valley to 20,000 people together with other venues located within walking distance such as Istanbul Convention & Exhibition Center and Hilton Convention Center. Cemal Reşit Rey Concert Hall (CRR), Cemal Topuzlu Open-Air Theatre and the Harbiye Mühsin Ertuğrul Theater can also be used as meeting venues. Halic Congress Center was inaugurated in March 2009 and hosted the 5th World Water Forum with 25,000 participants. Opening in mid-2011, the Oya Convention Center features 10,500 square meters of exhibition space, nine meeting rooms with a total area of over 950 square meters and a 1185 square meter ballroom, all integrated into an exciting multi-use shopping and entertainment complex. The Asian side of Istanbul, where several important business districts are located, grows with new investments in hotels and congress centers including Crowne Plaza Asia, Divan Asia, Green Park Pendik Convention Center & Hotel and Marriott Asia.

Recent congresses held in the city include the 54th Annual Congress of ULA (International Association of Lawyers), 33rd Annual Congress of European Accounting Association, the 43rd Annual Meeting of the European Society for Pediatric Gastroenterology, the 9th International Society for the Study of Xenobiotics, the 5th World Youth Congress and the 2nd Congress of the Union of European Neonatal and Perinatal Societies. Istanbul can accommodate all types of congresses, no matter what the size or composition, with its facilities and logistical solutions. The city is sure to provide a fantastic experience and offer a congress or meeting all the support and space it may need.

MEETINGS GO GREEN IN ISTANBUL

Comfort, luxury and technical infrastructure are no longer the only considerations while organizing international congresses. As the importance of environmentally responsible practices has dramatically grown in every aspect of life, congress tourism was also affected by this phenomenon.

As host of the 5th World Water Forum, Istanbul put environmental concerns at the forefront of its agenda. Sustainability in the meetings, incentives, events and the conference industry in general have become a key issue for meeting planners, national associations and corporations in the city.

Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (IBB) and the Government of Istanbul help meeting planners in organizing environmentally responsible practices. Bureau Veritas and the Turkish Hotels and Investors Association (TUROB) teamed up to launch “The Hotel Greening Project” in order to move the environmental agenda forward with Istanbul’s hotels by encouraging them to employ environmentally friendly strategies. The pilot project was realized during the 5th World Water Forum’s Green Forum Initiative to raise awareness on hotel greening techniques and to allow participating hotels take the first step toward greener accommodations.

Twenty-three hotels volunteering to participate in the Hotel Greening Project were audited according to the measurements of energy efficiency, water conservation and waste management practices, among other criteria. Hotels attaining a minimum standard received a certificate from Bureau Veritas and the OFI. Top performers in specific star categories received the “Green Steps Award”.

GREEN VENUES AND ACCOMMODATION

ICVB supports green initiatives, so that the city of Istanbul can move forward on the corporate social responsibility front.

Several meeting venues in Istanbul lead a variety of initiatives that create a natural environment, reduce energy usage and use minimal non-renewable resources.
İSTANBUL: THE ULTIMATE METROPOLIS

Thanks to its rich history, colorful daily life and dynamic spirit, Istanbul offers a once in a lifetime experience to its visitors.

Istanbul, Dersaadet, Konstantiniye, Byzantium... The many names of this city is a reflection of its many faces. As the only city in the world situated on two continents - Asia and Europe - Istanbul has proved an attractive settlement for various civilizations since ancient times. Thanks to its rich history, colorful daily life and dynamic spirit, Istanbul continues to offer a once in a lifetime experience to its visitors. The largest city in modern Turkey, Istanbul's cultural diversity, state of the art accommodation alternatives, unique blend of modern and traditional dining and entertainment options and stunningly rich history makes the 2010 European Capital of Culture an ideal destination for business organizations and leisure trips.

HISTORIC PENINSULA

As the former capital of the Byzantine and Ottoman empires, present day Istanbul retains the history that emerged from the city and integrates its historical values to the modern life. Sultanahmet, located at the center of the historic peninsula, is where most of the Istanbul's famous historical sights are located: Hagia Sophia and the Blue Mosque are both situated in this dynamic part of the city. A few hundred meters away is the world famous Grand Bazaar, which for the past six centuries has been a center for the trading of gold and authentic Turkish products. The nearby Basilica Cistern (Yerebatan Sarayi) is a breathtaking venue for banquets and special events.

No visit to Istanbul is complete without crossing the beautiful Golden Horn, the natural harbor opening to the Bosporus - and relaxing on the green
Istanbul is one of the world’s most exciting metropolises with international fairs, conferences, film, music and theater festivals, the international biennial, and sports organizations parks that stretch along the shore to enjoy magnificent sunsets. With their mixed Turkish, Greek and Jewish quarters, Eyüp, Fener and Balat are ideal for those who feel in the mood for a little time travel. The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, which administers 85 churches, stands in the Fener district. North of the historic peninsula, across the Golden Horn, is Galata, crowned by the Galata Tower. Galata, Beyoğlu and the İstiklal Street accommodate much of the city’s nightlife venues. On the nearby front of Karaköy, you can find Istanbul Modern, a museum with exhibitions of contemporary Turkish art.

THE HEART OF THE CITY: BEYÖĞLU
Beyoğlu, Istanbul’s culture and entertainment center, has always been a meeting point for cultures and peoples. The multiculturalism of this vibrant district is abundantly reflected in architecture, daily life and culinary culture. İstiklal Street is the heart of this large district full of cinemas, theaters, restaurants, cafes, bars, and clubs and almost every visitor to Istanbul is attracted by the bright lights of the Street. North of the Taksim Square is the newer part of the city. High skyscrapers rise from Levent and Maslak, the main business districts, reflecting a different skyline from the old city. Moving forward to Kuruçeşme, Arnavutköy, Bebek, Rumeli Hisarı, Batı İstanbul, Emirgan, İstinye, Venedik, Tarabya, Kireçburnu, Büyükçekmece, Sarıyer and Rumeli Feneri are all charming districts.

delicious seafood. North of Beşiktas you arrive at Ortaköy, whose cafes, restaurants and bars are enjoyable day or night. The districts beyond Ortaköy on the European side of the Bosphorus all have great natural beauty and places of entertainment: Küçükçekmece, Arnavutköy, Bebek, Rumeli Hisarı, Batı İstanbul, Emirgan, İstinye, Venedik, Tarabya, Kireçburnu, Büyükçekmece, Sarıyer and Rumeli Feneri are all charming districts.

THE SPECTACULAR BOSPHORUS
The Bosphorus, separating Asia and Europe, is the ultimate treasure and beauty of Istanbul. Both banks of the Bosphorus are decorated by characteristic, wooden waterside mansions, symbols of the old tradition of large, wealthy families residing on the Bosphorus’ shores. Fishing dominates life on the Bosphorus thanks to the fertile sea that brings shoals of fresh fish daily and on every shore of the Bosphorus are restaurants serving

STEPPING TO ASIA
Across the Bosphorus to exist is the Asian side centered on the historical districts of Üsküdar and Kadıköy. Üsküdar is symbolized by the Maiden Tower located on an islet just off the shore. The coasts of the Asian side are characterized by picturesque neighborhoods of Beykoz, Paşaobaçe, Çubuklu, Kanlica, Anadolu Hisarı, Kandilli, Çengelköy, Beykoz, Kuzucuncak and Paşalimanı. These districts once hosted the grand summer ‘sous of the Ottoman elite. Growing yearly, today this beautiful land is a vital part of the cultural life of Istanbul. Üsküdar and Kadıköy are quite popular with sea-side cafes, parks and traditional restaurants serving popular Turkish dishes.
No words can describe Istanbul better than a sunset photograph of the mysterious Maiden Tower (Kız Kulesi) located in the middle of the Bosphorus, or a picture of the Bosphorus Bridge illuminated at night. Yet, a brief look into the history and numerous historical artifacts can give us an impression of the open air museum.

Expanding the ancient Greek colony of Byzantium, Istanbul became the capital city under the name Constantinople, when Byzantine Emperor Constantine I rebuilt the city in the 4th century. In 1453, Ottoman emperor Sultan Mehmet the Conqueror took control of the city and named it the new Ottoman capital. Within 50 years of the conquest, Istanbul had become the largest city in Europe. Since then, the city became a gateway between East and West with the two bridges over the Bosphorus symbolizing this unique positioning. The old quarter of the city called "historical peninsula" is home to Topkapı Palace, Hagia Sophia, Sultanahmet Mosque, the Basilica Cistern (Yerebatan Sarayı), St. Irene’s Church, the Archeological Museum, the Museum of Oriental Antiquities and the Ibrahim Paşa Palace housing the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts.

Ever since it was built, people have been awed by the splendid decoration and the sheer scale of Hagia Sophia, one of Istanbul’s foremost historical monuments. According to Socrates, who lived in Istanbul between 380 and 440 AD, the first church on the site was erected by Emperor Constantine I. The church lived through a succession of emperors, rebellions and governments before welcoming a new era with the capture of the city by the Ottomans in 1453. Today, Hagia Sophia is a museum.

Sultanahmet is a museum by itself. At the Hippodrome (At Meydani), used for
official celebration and parades during the Roman Empire, you can see the 3000 years old Obelisk of Tuthmosis III that was brought from the Karnak temple in Egypt, the Column of Constantine or the Walled Obelisk, the Serpentini Column originally erected in front of Delphi’s Temple of Apollo by Greek city-states to celebrate their win over the Persians, the Fountain of Wilhelm II, also known as Alman Câşmî and the Million Stone modeled on the Milliarium Aureum that was erected by Julius Caesar in Rome. The Sultanahmet Mosque, the most significant piece of the classical Istanbul silhouette built in 1609, also fascinates its visitors.

Topkapı Palace, built by Sultan Mehmet the Conqueror in 1448, housed the Ottoman dynasty until the construction of Dolmabahçe Palace. It stretches across 700,000 square meters and it is the oldest palace that continues to stand today. The palace displays exsamples of Ottoman architecture, large collections of porcelain, robes, weapons, shields, Ottoman miniatures, treasure and jewelry.

If you go to the Beyazıt Square and take the narrow lane that leads off the main road at the side of the secondhand book market, you will find yourself at the main entrance to the Grand Bazaar, and walking downhill to the waterfront on the Golden Horn will lead you to all the mesmerizing colors of the Spice Market. Beyoğlu, aside being the entertainment center of the city, is also home to numerous historical buildings. In Galata, just down the hill from Beyoğlu, you could imagine yourself in Genoa. This is no surprise, because the Genoese set up a colony here during the Byzantine Empire. Galata enchants visitors with its buildings in cosmopolitan style and steep, narrow streets. The landmark here is the Galata Tower, which was constructed by the Genoese with special permission from the Byzantines in the 14th or 15th century. The tower stands on a point that dominates both the Bosphorus and the Golden Horn. Dolmabahçe Palace built between 1844 and 1855 is noted for its ornate exterior ornamentation. The palace was home to six Ottoman Sultans. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the Turkish Republic, died in the middle of the Bosphorus. This attractive small building has been used over the centuries as a watchtower and lighthouse. Today, it houses a cafe and restaurant with amazing views.

One of Istanbul’s landmarks is the Galata Tower, standing on a point that dominates both the Bosphorus and the Golden Horn.
THE CITY THAT NEVER SLEEPS

Istanbul is Turkey’s ultimate dining, music and entertainment capital, with restaurants, bars, clubs and concert halls.

When the sun goes down, Istanbul opens its doors to all kinds of entertainment. While the city is undoubtedly Turkey’s cultural and historical capital, it is also the ultimate dining and entertainment center, with restaurants, bars, clubs and concert halls.

BEYÖGLU: THE HIPPEST PART OF TOWN

Taksim and Beyoğlu are no doubt the center of nightlife in the city. The bars and pubs on the streets leading to İstiklal Caddesi, the clubs that can be found around the streets nearby, the wine bars in the area, and the venues where DJs play the hottest hits from all over the world and live bands perform, form the heart of the city’s nightlife. If you are in Beyoğlu, do not miss the historic Çıçek Pıskın (Flower Market), home to many traditional taverns, and Ataşehir, a lively street with a new bar popping up even in the smallest corners.

If you are up for a little music, Istanbul has it all: rock music, Latin and world music, jazz and so on. Located in the woods, with various stages, restaurants, cafes, and a big swimming pool, Park Omanc is one of the most important concert venues of the city. Masek Venue also hosts international artists and festivals at its open and indoor venues. Kuruçeşme Arena is another important concert venue by the Bosphorus.

For more traditional entertainment, you can visit Kumkapı, one of Istanbul’s best known entertainment centers on the European shore of the Marmara Sea. Ortaköy boasts many bars and is one of the main centers of nightlife in the city. Also, Kuruçeşme and Amasralı have both great bars and restaurants aligned on the sea side.

DINING IN ISTANBUL: A CULTURAL EXPERIENCE

Istanbul incorporates the finest examples of traditional and international cuisines. Turkish cuisine reached a peak of sophistication with the cuisine of...
the Ottoman palace, where skilled and experienced cooks created an imperial cuisine with finest ingredients. The addition of delicious vegetables and herbs from the coastal regions of the Mediterranean in particular, and the flavor of olive oil led to the emergence of mezes, or hors d'oeuvres, which are an integral feature of Turkish cuisine. Fish meals are an essential part of the Turkish cuisine. For most of the year, the Çanakkale and Istanbul straits are full of migrating fish, the majority of which are peculiar to those straits. As well as Turkish cuisine in all of its diversity, Istanbul has a large number of excellent restaurants specializing in French, Italian, Mexican, Indian, Far Eastern and other world cuisines. Over the past decade these have multiplied to include English pubs, French cafés, sushi bars, Tex-Mex and South American restaurants. Turkish cuisine possesses a range of fabulous desserts, including milk puddings, sweet pastries, and fruit puddings of various kinds, often flavoured with pistachios and other nuts. Turkish delight (lölema), made of starch and sugar, baklava, which is a rich, sweet pastry made of layers of phyllo dough filled with chopped nuts in another desert. With a history going back to Ottomar times, Turkish coffee is the subject of many stories. After a fabulous meal, you are ready to hit the streets. Bon appetit!  

"On a warm, starry night, nothing beats this terrace high above the Bosphorus for fantastic views over Istanbul"  

"No Restaurant can top the view from Sunset Grill & Bar"  

"A great view has been vital to the continuing popularity of Sunset Grill & Bar"  

"The Star of Delicious Sushi"  

"Mediterranean Cuisine * Dry aged charcoal Steaks & Seafood * Sushi Bar * Freshly prepared Turkish Specialties * Turkish & Japanese Style Fish * An Amazing Wine List"  

A must see Istanbul institution
ONE ENORMOUS BAZAAR

“Historical bazaars and modern shopping malls; Istanbul has it all for shopping enthusiasts.”
Istanbul has always been at the crossroads of major trading routes. Since shopping and trade are central characteristics of this great city, you should definitely include some shopping in your to-do list in Istanbul. Istanbul has both historical bazaars dating back to the Ottoman era, and modern shopping malls essential for all metropolises. One can find everything in Istanbul, where people live together in a tremendous hustle and bustle; the mystery of the East and the practicality of the West combined.

For a real shopping experience in Istanbul, visit the traditional markets and antique stores, where a myriad of objects wait to be discovered.

The best place to start shopping is the magnificent Grand Bazaar (Kapalıçarşı), which stands in one of the oldest settlements of the city, the historical peninsula. First time visitors are astounded by the Grand Bazaar’s splendor and size. It contains 3,000 shops, 61 streets and two mosques. Jewelries, decorated with gold, silver and precious stones, you can find all kinds of valuable decorative items, from antique jewels to modern pendants. Renowned rug and carpet shops sell priceless hand-made carpets that came from all over Turkey. In addition to gifts and souvenirs made of pottery, wicker, wood, copper and silver, the Grand Bazaar is also a center for leather goods and accessories.

Next to Yeniçami at Eminönü is the Egyptian Bazaar (Misir Çarşısı) or the Spice Bazaar. Here, the attractive smells of cumin, mint, cinnamon and countless other herbs and spices create an amazing ambiance.

Sultanahmet is also an excellent place for shopping, where you can watch craftsmen making their merchandise.

MODERN SHOPPING MALLS
Istinye Park located in the Masal district is one of the prominent shopping malls of the city offering an open-air shopping experience with many designer stores. Akmerkez in Levent offers a genuine shopping experience with its 346 stores and countless cafes and patisseries. Another important shopping center within the same district is Kanyon, one of Turkey’s most distinguished residential, commercial and retail projects with a unique architecture. In Mecidiyeköy, there is Cevahir Istanbul, one of the biggest shopping centers of the world. Cevahir Istanbul has many cinemas with a total capacity of 2500 in addition to a theatre and an IMAX. Casaul and Capacity in Balıköy, close to the Atatürk Airport, City’s in Nişantaşı, Metrocity in Levent and Astoria in Mecidiyeköy are other important shopping centers. Moreover, Istanbul has numerous outlet malls like Via Port near Sabiha Gökçen Airport on the Asian side, Olivium in Yeşilköy and Optimum in Ataşehir. While the shopping centers and markets supply everything, an enthusiastic shopper could ever need, the city of Istanbul itself is one great big bazaar. Make the most of it. And happy shopping!
A KID-FRIENDLY CITY

Parks, playgrounds, museums and aquariums, Istanbul is the perfect place for children.

In Maslak, practically a forest in the city center, offers activities like swimming and nature sports. It also has a kids club with tree houses. Yıldız Park, one of the largest public parks in Istanbul located between the palaces of Yıldız and Çırağan, is a beautiful garden complex with panoramic views of the Bosphorus.

It is also a popular place for picnics. Moreover, other attractions like the Beştepe Forest are ideal for entertaining children where they can run and play outdoors. The Kışlaçiftlik Park in Maçka is an 8000 m² entertainment venue with a large amusement park. Most shopping malls in Istanbul have playgrounds.

Istanbul is without a doubt a unique city that every traveler desires to visit. For travelers with families, this great metropolis has many attractions focusing on children. Istanbul is a kid-friendly city.

There are plenty of parks and playgrounds all over the city. For example, Parkorman in Maslak, practically a forest in the city center, offers activities like swimming and nature sports. It also has a kids club with tree houses. Yıldız Park, one of the largest public parks in Istanbul located between the palaces of Yıldız and Çırağan, is a beautiful garden complex with panoramic views of the Bosphorus.

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Istinye Park, a mall with outdoor and indoor shopping areas, has a kids’ entertainment center around 1,500 m² where your children can have fun while you are shopping or socializing.

One can argue that museums will not appeal to most children. However, there are several museums in Istanbul which can prove this wrong. One is the Toy Museum, Lütfi Kirdar, a restored Ottoman mansion in Gümüştepe on the Asian side of the city, which houses a collection of two thousand toys. Each exhibit is arranged according to theme where for instance, miniature train sets are displayed in a genuine train compartment. You can also enjoy the puppet theater and the magic show staged on the weekends.

Over on the European side, the Rahmi Koç Museum, the first major museum in Turkey dedicated to the history of Transport, Industry and Communications, houses thousands of items from gramophone needles to full-size ships and aircraft. The Hands-On Gallery is designed specifically for children, where they can climb all over a vintage car, sit in the cockpit of a real plane and take part in scientific experiments.

The Naval Museum in Beşiktaş, one of the richest naval museums in the world, is another venue which can attract children’s interest. The Istanbul Museum of Modern Art hosts workshops for children, usually in Turkish, but some are suitable for non-Turkish speakers as well. Santralistanbul, an arts and cultural complex located in Eyüp, offers a variety of weekend workshops for children and teenagers like drawing and painting by dreaming, making music without musical instruments, creating sculptures of wire and ceramics, dancing and producing projects at science workshops, where children can learn subjects like electricity and energy while having fun. Here we should note that most museums in Istanbul are closed on Mondays.

If you want sunshine and culture combined, you can always visit Miniaturk where you can see all the sights of Turkey in a single afternoon, including the Hagia Sophia, the Suleymaniye Mosque and the ancient city of Ephesus, as well as modern constructs like the Bosphorus Bridge. The 60,000 m² site contains some 105 miniatures 1:25 of their original size, an open-air theatre, playground, life-size chessboard and a maze.

For children who love animals, Istanbul has a lot to offer. Turkuazoo, the first modern giant aquarium in Turkey located in Bay ramapaşa on the European side, has 29 aquariums housing different inhabitants of the sea including sharks, giant stingrays, piranhas and octopus. Visitors can also enjoy the opportunity to dive with hundreds of various sea species and even sharks. If your kids prefer dolphins, Istanbul Dolphinarium in Eyüp gives you the chance to swim with those charming mammals. Or you can just sit back and watch the shows performed by seals, walruses, whales, as well as dolphins.

If you want to include a little sea adventure to your visit, the Princes’ Islands, a chain of nine islands off the coast of Istanbul, are popular destinations for day trips. Lots of open space, playgrounds and beaches: what more can children want? Since cars are banned on the islands, bicycles or horse-drawn carts are the best way to get around. You can reach the islands through ferries which are extremely enjoyable by themselves. While this kid-friendly side of the city is quite amazing, travelers should also note that the usual tourist attractions do not lack the potential to entertain both parents and kids.

What could be more fulfilling than a trip to the Grand Bazaar? How about a stroll in Sultanahmet, one of the most historic places in Istanbul with the mosques, the Basilica Cistern and the Topkapı Palace, where sightseeing alone can fill a whole day? Have fun!
Istanbul is the center of higher education in Turkey, hosting 37 public and private universities with thousands of students graduating each year. Most of Istanbul’s universities are located in historical buildings in popular districts such as the Bosphorus, Beşiktaş or Yalı. Therefore, these campuses are also living spaces for students.

This vivacious educational life gives great dynamism to the city’s daily life. Istanbul is a city of 15 millions, while 60 percent of its population comprises young people. Therefore, the city has great academic potential. This potential reflects itself in the productivity of the universities, which publish over 10,000 academic papers each year. Almost all Turkish universities in Istanbul teach in English, German or French as the primary foreign language, usually accompanied by a secondary foreign language. Most universities include institutes and research centers which generate a vast amount of academic knowledge.

With more than thirty public and private universities, Istanbul is definitely the country’s education capital published abroad in several different languages, contributing to various academic disciplines. In short, the city’s academic productivity creates scientific development, platforms of research and discussions and it carries a huge potential to attract even more international organizations, where experts can set the agenda on national and global issues.

Istanbul University is the oldest educational institution in the city. Dating back to 1453, Istanbul University’s location suits its long history and
The high quality of education and the city’s charm makes Istanbul an attraction for international students as well.

Yıldız Technical University, dating back to 1911, was established as an autonomous higher education and research institution in 1960. It encompasses departments of science, literature and engineering as well as fine arts departments. The only Francophone university in Turkey, Galatasaray University is a participant of the European exchange programs Erasmus and Socrates. The building which accommodates Galatasaray University was originally the Feriye Palace, a coastal summer palace on the Bosphorus built in 1871. In the last decades numerous private universities have been opened, expanding and diversifying Istanbul’s academic life. They all offer several scholarships to support students throughout their academic life at the university.

Established in 1996, Sabancı University is the only college in Turkey that offers a liberal arts undergraduate curriculum. The main campus is located 15 km to the east of Istanbul, near the village of Orhanlı in Tuzla.

Koç University is another prominent private college established in 1993. Its main campus is in Rumeli Feneri, Sariyer on the European side of the Bosphorus. Located at Cihal, neighboring the famous district Balat at the Golden Horn, Kadir Has University is the fastest growing university in Istanbul.

İstanbul Bilgi University has three campuses in Dolapdere, Kuztepe and Silahdar, all in the city center. İstanbul Commerce University, founded and supported by the İstanbul Chamber of Commerce, has campuses in Üsküdar, Küçükçekmece and Eminönü. Yeditepe University, founded in 1996, is located in Kaysıcadde on the Asian side. Doğuş University, celebrating its 10th year, offers exchange student programs with 30 countries.

İşık University, part of the Feyzullah Foundation which was established in Thessalonica in 1865, is located in Mudâk. The high quality of education and the city’s charm makes Istanbul an attraction for international students as well. Most of the city’s universities have exchange programs for foreign students.
Istanbul is accessible from all parts of the world, served by more than 300 international airlines. Besides air transport, visitors to Istanbul have several options; international train, ferry, bus services and other means of transportation connecting Istanbul to neighboring European countries. The city has two international airports; Sabiha Gökçen Airport on the Asian side and Atatürk Airport on the European side.

Istanbul is connected to highways that provide a link to most European cities - Germany, France, Bulgaria, Greece, Syria, Russia, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Iran and Syria are but a land trip away from Istanbul. Although the Orient Express is no longer available, there are modern international trains. Sea transportation is very developed in Istanbul, which has a number of ports by which the ferries can dock.

Istanbul is a large metropolis with over 13 millions inhabitants. Therefore the city has an extensive public transport network. Public transportation in Istanbul consists of an extensive bus network, rail systems, funiculars, and maritime services. It is advisable to purchase an Akbil, a debit card usable in most forms of public transportation within the city.
ACCESS TO İSTANBUL

Istanbul is accessible by air, sea, rail, and road. Air transport is perhaps the most significant considering overall congress requirements, but other modes of transportation may be more convenient for visitors from neighboring countries.

BY AIR
Most international and domestic flights arrive and depart from Istanbul’s Atatürk Airport, which is 28 km from the city center. The airport has been recently expanded and is able to handle 70,000 passengers a day, a figure that rises to 95,000-100,000 at peak times. Istanbul’s second airport, Sabiha Gökçen International Airport is on the Asian side of Istanbul, 50 km away from Taksiyarhis Square in the city center. Most major European airports are 2-4 hours away from Istanbul by air. From the east coast of North America, Istanbul is about a 10-hour journey. Istanbul is accessible from all parts of the world, served by more than 300 international airlines.

BY RAIL
There are trains from Sofia, Belgrade, Bucharest and Budapest (connections from Munich and Vienna) to Sirkeci Station in Istanbul. Main services are:
- Bosphorus Express: from Bucharest, daily
- TransBalkan Express: from Budapest via Bucharest, daily
- Prietania Express: from Kischinev, daily
- Balkan Express: from Belgrade via Sofia, daily
- IC 90/91: from Thessalonica, daily (connection from Athens)

There are two main train stations in Istanbul: Sirkeci Station on the European side and Haydarpaşa Station on the Asian side. These historic station buildings are nostalgic gateways to the city. Both stations are well equipped with restaurants, newspaper kiosks, waiting rooms and ATMs.

Both stations are conveniently located. Haydarpaşa station on the Asian shore is connected to the European shore by ferry

AIR MILES TO İSTANBUL FROM SOME INTERNATIONAL CITIES

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to Karaköy, and Sirkeci station is a short walk or taxi ride from Eminönü ferry terminals. Suburban trains also run from Sirkeci and Haydarpaşa stations. Trains to Sultanahmet run past Sirkeci station, and city bus services are available.

BY ROAD
The road network throughout Turkey is extensive, with motorways, dual carriageways, and numerous two-lane highways. Drivers bringing cars into Turkey must show their registration documents and driving license at the point of entry. If arriving from Europe, visitors must have a Green Card (available from insurance companies) as well as appropriate insurance. Driving is on the right. Seat belts are mandatory and drinking after consuming alcoholic drinks is prohibited. The speed limits are 120km/h on motorways, 90km/h on main roads and 50km/h in towns. Coach services to all parts of Turkey are reliable, reasonably priced and convenient. Istanbul's International Bus Terminal located in Eyüp is, about ten kilometers from the city center, serves all international and domestic lines.

BY SEA
The Bosphorus Strait divides Istanbul's Asian and European shores. Central Istanbul and the historical peninsula are on the European shore, which is itself divided by the natural harbor of the Golden Horn (Haliç). Tiny fishing boats and day cruisers share the Bosphorus with enormous international cargo ships, racy vessels, tankers and giant luxury liners from Europe.

The two largest quays, Eminönü and Karaköy, are on opposite sides of the Golden Horn and linked by the Galata Bridge. Karaköy is where luxury cruise ships header for the Aegean and Mediterranean ports, as well as smaller CIS vessels. Local ferry services mainly depart from Eminönü, Karaköy, Beşiktaş and Üsküdar.

International ferry services
1. Istanbul-Ukraine-Odessa
2. Venice-Izmir
3. Athens-Izmir
4. Brindisi (Italy) or Izmir (Italy)-Genoa (Italy)
5. Various services from Turkish coastal towns to Greek islands

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

BY AIR
Airport Phone: (+90 212) 463 55 55
THY General Directorate Phone: (+90 212) 463 63 63
THY Reservation Phone: (+90 212) 444 08 49

BY RAIL
Haydarpaşa (Working Hours: 08:00-18:00)
Phone: (+90 212) 348 80 21
Sirkeci (International Trains only) (Working Hours: 07:00-24:00)
Phone: (+90 212) 520 65 75 / 4128 ext.

BY SEA
Port Phone: (+90 212) 252 50 00
General Directorate of Turkish Maritime Authority (5SC)
Rüteh Caddesi Merkez Han No: 4 80120 Karaköy

DISTANCES FROM MAIN EUROPEAN CAPITALS

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Various transportation vehicles are available in Istanbul, one of the biggest cities in Europe. Railroads, bus lines, and trams are supported by sea vehicles that travel between two continents. "Akbil" (smart ticket) devices - used in almost all transportation vehicles - can be purchased from offices near major transport interchanges all around the city. The website www.ietv.gov.tr submits detailed information on transportation alternatives.

**BUSES**
Metropolitan buses in Istanbul are frequent and economic. They travel to almost any point within the city and some villages around the city. Alternatives are privately operated buses using the same lines where you can pay onboard. The "metrobus", which operates between Sökürtlüçeşme on the Asian side and Avolar on the European side, is another popular transportation alternative that can save a lot of time.

**RAILWAY**
The modern subway and tram system is one of the most convenient means of transportation in Istanbul. Trains departing from Sirkeci on the European side and Haydarpaşa on the Anatolian side reach the outer parts of the city.

**SUBWAY**
The Istanbul Metro, or the M2, is a mass-transit underground railway network, running from the Ataşehir Oto Sarayı station at Maslak in the north to the Şişhane station at Beyoğlu in the south.

**TRAM**
The tramline lines are Yeşilköy-Ümraniye-Kabataş, Göztepe-Başaktaş and Beşiktaş-Sultanbeyli. Tram, the cultural and entertainment center of the city is accessible from Kabataş by a short funicular railway. A light rail line, known as M4, runs from Yüzyılpaşa, near Aksaray, to Eisenler and Matlıg Airport.

**SEA**
The sea route is usually the quickest way between the European and Asian sides, particularly during rush-hour. Ferries connect the two sides of the city. There are city-line ferries that run the length of the Bosphorus and the Golden Horn, and also go to and from the islands. There are also tourist excursions along the Bosphorus.
Smaller private motorboats that depart from Beşiktaş on the European side drop their passengers at Uskudar on the Asian side in six minutes. The modern catamarans are for those who want to get about fast.

**TAXI**
Licensed taxis in Istanbul are yellow and have registration numbers on the sides. They can be found on the ranks or hailed on the street. Also hotels, restaurant and bar staffs provide taxi. Bridge tolls are added onto the taxi fare.

**DOLMÜŞ**
One practical solution in transportation in Istanbul is the dolmuş, a shared taxi seating 7 or 8 passengers that operates on specific routes through the busiest parts of the city until midnight. The destination is written on signs placed on the windshield.
İSTANBUL ATATÜRK
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Istanbul Atatürk International Airport is the city's gateway to the world, hosting millions of passengers every year and servicing airlines from all over the world. With its architecture, speed of passenger throughput, level of service and advanced technology, it is also one of the top airports in the world.

Operated by TAV Istanbul Terminal Operations Co., a subsidiary of TAV Airports Holding since 2000, the airport is ranked as the second in the category “Best Airport of South Europe” in “The World’s Best Airports 2009 Awards” event organized by Skytrax Research, the leading research Advisors to the world airline and air transport industry based in London, UK.

The data on movement to and from the airport, shows Turkey's integration to the world. Atatürk International Airport hosts around 750 to 800 flights a day and services approximately 90,000 passengers a day, a figure that rises to 100,000 to 110,000 and flights to 900 to 950 a day at peak times. The airport is situated 21 kilometers west of city center on 9,470,554 square meters of land.

Transportation to and from the airport is available by metered taxis as well as subway, which starts from the city center, municipal buses, and shuttle buses of the HİVAŞ company, which also operates ground services at the airport. The airport hosts 40 cafes, bars, restaurants and refreshment stalls with a combined seating capacity of 5,250. It also houses bank offices, ATMs, car rental dealers, drugstores, hairdressers, flower shops, gift shops, foreign exchange bureaus, kiosks, dried fruit sellers and also a health center, a massage parlor and a photo shop. Istanbul International Airport Hotel operated by IFA Catering Services, offers 131 rooms of luxury accommodation, as well as hourly accommodation on the airside. The operation of Turkey's airports and the organization and control of the air traffic in Turkey's airspace are handled by the General Directorate of the State Airports Administration (DHAVA).

The founding of Istanbul Atatürk International Airport dates to 1912, the year in which a military airport was opened there. The airport took the name Yeşilköy Airport and was opened to international flights in 1953. In 1985, renovation work was completed and the same year, the airport took the name of Atatürk, the founder of modern Turkey.
Sabıha Gökçen International Airport

Sabıha Gökçen Airport is getting ready to open new horizons for Turkey, just like the woman combat pilot of Turkey that it is named after. The airport which is the first step towards the “Advanced Technology Industry Park” project, which shall serve the country in numerous fields such as transportation, foreign trade, aviation and technology, shall act as a leader for conversion of the region into a technology base in the future. Just like Sabıha Gökçen leading the way to Turkish women in undertaking equal roles with men in all fields of business, years ago. The airport is located on the Anatolian shore of Istanbul at Pendik / Kartal, at a distance of 40 km to Kadıköy, 12 km to Pendik and 50 km to Taksim. It has a really convenient traffic in terms of transportation with its 1.5 km connection to the TEM motorway.

The Haydarpaşa-Gezi Park Express is available departing from Pendik Train Station. There are also regular suburban services.

Public transportation (ETT) departs from Sabıha Gökçen Airport (SAW) to central Istanbul. There are many ways to travel from Sabıha Gökçen Airport into the several main locations of Istanbul such as Sultanahmet, Taksim, Eminönü (Sirkeci), Beyazıt (İstanbul) Esenyurt, Hareem, Bakırköy, Yeşilköy, Tuzla, by taxi, Hairas Services, or the public bus services (ETT).

The features and the services that will be provided by the new terminal of the Istanbul Sabıha Gökçen International Airport and its complementaries includes:

- 112 check - in counters, 24 CUSS (Common Use Self Service) check-in kiosks,
- 32 passport counters each for incoming and outgoing passengers,
- 1,000 sqm food court for cafes and restaurants belonging to the leading food & beverage brands,
- 5,500 sqm Duty Free shopping area is run by SETUR and occupies a space of 3,300 sqm and 1,200 sqm in the departures and arrivals halls respectively.
- Other than the usual duty free shopping items, such as local/foreign drinks, tobacco and cosmetics, especially ready-wear, textile accessories and electronics is offered for sale.
- 3 apron viewing lounges and VIP halls,
- A two-storey VIP building with terminal connection,
- 800 sqm conference center,
- A four - storey car park with a capacity of about 4,718 vehicles & 72 buses,
- A four - storey airport hotel with 128 rooms, adjacent to the terminal and with separate entrances at air and ground sides,
- Multi aircraft parking system, allowing synchronized service to 8 aircrafts with large fuselages (ATA code E) or 16 middle sized fuselage aircrafts (ATA code C),
- EDS (Explosives Detection Systems) baggage screening.