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Istanbul/Turkey Cheat Sheets

Turkey Travels

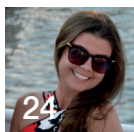
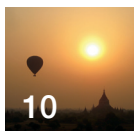


I visited Turkey for the first time when I was fourteen years old, and I still remember how seeing the ruins of Ephesus brought history alive. Walking on the ancient roadways into centuries-old houses, where the baths and toilets still stood as they had in the time of Socrates, just floored me. My sisters and I prowled the Grand Bazaar, where we haggled with shopkeepers over the prices of leather jackets. We bargained hard. They insisted on serving us Turkish coffee, and we parted with smiles, each thinking that we had gotten the best of the other. The smells of the Spice Market, the sounds of the muezzin's call to prayer, the sight of women in head scarves and robes ushered us into an exotic land. Even as a teenager, I knew that I would never forget the beauty of the minarets rising on either side of the Bosphorus, which sliced the city into Europe and Asia.

I have been fortunate to return to Turkey a number of times since that first visit. And while Istanbul has been transformed into one of the world's most exciting cities—thrumming with

new businesses and modern, hip restaurants—it retains its unique essence. It has the trappings of other Western cities, such as first-class hotels, luxury boutiques and stylish residents, but it resembles nowhere else and celebrates its Ottoman past and traditions with passion. This inspiring dichotomy is one of the reasons we decided to host an Indagare Insider Trip to Turkey, and why we are dedicating this issue of our *Black Book* magazine to featuring the country's treasures. From the Aegean seaside resort of Bodrum to the haunting landscapes of Cappadocia, the articles celebrate authentic experiences and give insider tips and recommendations. The spotlight is on Istanbul, a city that is as modern as it is Turkish. You can feel the energy in its streets as it rubs right up against ancient history. Happy reading, travel dreaming and planning your next trip to this fascinating place.

Melissa Bizz Bradley



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Istanbul & Turkey Cheat Sheets

The World of Indagare



About Indagare

Indagare comes from the Latin word that means to seek, scout, discover. Indagare Travel is a high-end travel company with robust online editorial content and a boutique in-house travel agency. We travel, we write, and we plan memorable journeys for our members. To learn about our travel community, visit www.indagare.com or call 212-988-2611. Annual membership rates begin at \$325.



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At Indagare you can research ideas for a trip on our site and consult with a specialist on the phone or by email to create, refine or expand your itinerary. Our Bookings Team can help you with something as simple as a hotel room or as complex as creating a multi-stop itinerary. We also have special rates and amenities at hundreds of properties. Email bookings@indagare.com or call 212-988-2611.



Insider Trips

Insider Trips are special journeys designed exclusively for Indagare members. With their insider access, mapped-out itineraries and exciting immersion in far-flung destinations, the trips offer members a rich and rewarding way to explore the world. Upcoming destinations include India, Cuba and Russia. For more information, call 646-963-2242 or email info@indagare.com.



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The Ultimate Grand Canyon

The iconic American destination can be explored by foot, mule or Harley, but itineraries have to be well mapped out. **Amelia Osborne** outlines three options.



Grand Canyon's South Rim

The Grand Canyon has been a quintessential American destination since well before the Griswold family graced the silver screen in *National Lampoon's Vacation*. One of the Seven Wonders of the World, the canyon has inspired countless poets, artists and writers; President Theodore Roosevelt, in a passionate pitch for the site's conservation, described it as "absolutely unparalleled throughout the rest of the world." Unfortunately, the "grandeur" and "sublimity" Roosevelt extolled do not extend to the local lodgings. There are no high-end accommodations close by, requiring visitors to strategize when it comes to plotting an itinerary.

Indagare has helped members plan many trips to this part of the U.S., even a family's Harley-Davidson motorcycle adventure. Here are three ways of visiting.

Lay of the Land: Located in the northwest corner of Arizona, the Grand Canyon extends for nearly 2,000 square miles. Its two main entrances, the South Rim and the North Rim, are both easily accessible by car. The more popular South Rim is a few hours' drive from such airports as Phoenix and Flagstaff, in Arizona. This is the place that has those iconic red-ravine views. Its South Kaibab Trail offers a good hike, but on days when the sun is strong, the

more sheltered Bright Angel Trail is the better choice. The more remote North Rim gets about 10 percent as many visitors as the South Rim. At a much higher elevation, it's most easily accessed from Las Vegas or by driving from Utah and sits. The drive from the South Rim to the North Rim takes five hours. Passes for the Kaibab National Forest may be purchased, and the drive to Saddle Mountain or Tuweep are not to be missed.

Itinerary 1: The Road Tripper

The Grand Canyon is well situated for road trips between Sedona and Las Vegas. Must stops along the way include Lake Powell, Zion National

Park and Grafton, Utah, a bona fide cowboy ghost town. The Grand Canyon can be toured when driving from one destination to another or as a day trip from **Amangiri** (read *Indagare's review*), a two-hour drive to the North Rim, or from Arizona's **Enchantment** (read *Indagare's review*), a two-and-a-half-hour drive from the South Rim. To avoid the biggest crowds at the South Rim, plan to go at the beginning of summer (early June) and visit first-thing in the morning or during sunset. For an overnight, the best option is **El Tovar**, a lodge whose accommodations are not high-end but which is booked up to a year in advance because of its location.

When to Go: Heavy snowfall can make the North Rim inaccessible in winter, but the South Rim has desert-like weather throughout the year (expect some rain in August).

Luxe Camping: Indagare can help arrange custom expeditions in the Southwest, which include the Grand Canyon, Lake Powell and Moab. Nights can be spent in private luxury camps in canvas tents with mattresses. It's as luxe as camping in the U.S. gets.

Itinerary 2: The Endurance Hiker

Adventure seekers will relish the opportunity to hike in the Grand Canyon as a way to enjoy the majestic site without the tour buses. Located within the canyon, the **Phantom Ranch** is quite rustic, with gender-separated dormitories and basic cabins with bunk

beds, but it makes a good base camp for hikers. Plan to stay at least two nights to allow time for the day it takes to climb down into the canyon, a day for trekking and a full day to climb back up to the rim. Hikers are rewarded with incredible landscapes, but this itinerary requires endurance.

Itinerary 3: The Glamour Traveler

By far the glitziest option is to take a private helicopter tour, from Las Vegas. Choose the three-plus-hour "landing tour," allowing for extra time to explore the canyon rim on foot. In Las Vegas, a good hotel option is the **Mandarin Oriental** (read *Indagare's review*) which has a contemporary design scheme and a relaxed ambiance, thanks to the fact that there is no casino on the premises. Another great conclusion to an American West tour is by ending up at the **Enchantment Resort**, in Arizona, or at the **Amangiri**, in Utah; both resorts take inspiration from their incredible natural surroundings, making them memorable and destination-specific finales to a trip. ■



Read Indagare members' postcards about trips to the American West. For help planning a journey there, contact our Bookings Team: 212-988-2611.

Wine with a Conscience

Indagare's **Cabell Belk** speaks to two innovative vintners who have turned the art of winemaking into a vehicle for giving back.



Cultivate co-founders Ali and Charles Banks

In the spring of 2010, while on a date at Blackberry Farm, Charles and Ali Banks made a list of things they wanted to cultivate during the next decade of their lives. At the time, they were running Napa's Screaming Eagle Winery, a producer of very expensive cult wines. Despite the fact that they were consistently making wines that drew waiting lists numbering in the thousands, there were items on their own list that needed new room to grow. Out of their conviction that wine could be a powerful humanitarian instrument, a new brand was born. Cultivate, its name a tribute to the conversation that inspired it, would allow its founders the opportunity to make wines to which more people could relate. They also wanted to share the returns—10 percent of their gross revenue, to be exact—with nonprofit organizations working on behalf of education and basic human needs. Here's how their innovative business model works: Cultivate's team creates bespoke blends using grapes that it has hand selected from the best harvests of the season at the best value in

the industry. These blends are the product of years of experience, tireless world travel and obsessive tastings. Cultivate then donates 10 percent of the quarterly revenue to charitable organizations chosen by its consumers. This process, called The Give, takes place on the company's Web site, where nonprofits campaign for sponsorship and visitors vote for the causes they find most compelling. At the end of each quarter, the organizations with the most votes collect their winnings. Indagare spoke to Ali and Charles about their unique concept and company.

What inspired a business model in which you give away a portion of your earnings?

We're convinced that integrating business and charity ultimately renders them both more sustainable, and resourceful entrepreneurs are beginning to catch on. Tom's Shoes is an exemplary success story. We feel that the better we do what we do best, the more money we give away, the more profoundly we impact our community.

What are some of the ways in which grant-winning organizations have turned their Cultivate dollars into material support for education and basic human needs?

Our first \$10,000 winner was Jones Valley Urban Farm [JVUF] of Birmingham, Alabama. In 2001, the organization's founders turned an abandoned downtown lot into a teaching organic farm. After the transformation was complete, they partnered with local public elementary schools to offer hands-on agriculture and nutrition education to the students. With the grant, JVUF was able to add an entire school to its roster.

Do you have a favorite indulgent vineyard escape (or two) that you'd recommend to oenophile travelers?

For a dreamy Napa getaway, we love the Poetry Inn with its magnificent sweeping views of the surrounding vineyards. For travelers interested in venturing further afield, the French medieval village of Saint-Émilion, whose first vineyards were planted by Roman monks in the 2nd century, is home to Hostellerie de Plaisance, which has an outstanding restaurant. And as far as natural beauty is concerned, the drama of South Africa's Cape Winelands is simply unrivaled.

Any vineyards in particular that you'd recommend as part of a day trip from Cape Town?

The Stellenbosch Valley is famously scenic and less than an hour from Cape Town. We actually own a vineyard there, Mulderbosch, which has a beautiful new tasting room with outdoor seating and a wood-burning pizza oven. The owners of DeMorgenzon, also in the area, have studied the relationship between plant growth and sound energy, and they play Baroque music to their vines from sunup to sundown.

What will you "cultivate" next?

Fable, our vineyard in the Tulbagh Valley, is more remote and challenging than Mulderbosch. We farm biodynamically there, battling severe weather, fires, leopards and baboons, but the wines are beautiful and tell the story of the place and its environment. **■**

[Read the complete interview, as well as many more articles about food and wine on Indagare.com.](#)



Emerging Wine Regions

"For its sheer immensity: **Argentina**. There is just so much land! Someone in Patagonia will make a fabulous Pinot Noir in our lifetime. Priorat, in **Catalonia**, also has a really special pioneer energy. The enthusiasm of all of the young people who are getting involved in winemaking is making it feel like a grassroots movement. The region is known for its Grenache, which is one of our favorite underrated grapes. For whites, we are wild about **South Africa**, which is just beginning to come into its own. Before long, South African winemakers should be making the best white wine for the money in the world. It's going to be a really fun ten- to fifteen-year run."

Australia in Style

Indagare founder **Melissa Biggs Bradley** travels down under with her family and discovers a whole new generation of luxe lodges.



Wolgan Valley Resort

Though Australia is roughly the same size as North America, it has few luxury resorts. This is not surprising, as Australians tend to eschew formality. But in recent years, a new breed of “super lodges,” modeled after the wilderness camps of South Africa and New Zealand, has opened. I visited a number of them on my recent trip and came away with a renewed sense of awe for the natural beauty that Australia offers. And, of course, its residents’ infectious warmth cannot be beat. *Read full reviews of these on Indagare.com.*

Wolgan Valley Resort, Blue Mountains

Why Go: To experience the Australian wilderness in the Blue Mountains for a weekend away from Sydney or for a longer, highly comfortable stay. It’s great, too, for avid equestrians, as Wolgan’s riding program is first-rate.

What It Is: This luxury eco-resort in the Blue Mountains feels like an Australian version of a high-end dude ranch. The resort sits on 4,000 acres in a valley of the Greater Blue Mountains that is surrounded

on both sides by national parks. It is rich in wildlife, with 120 species of vertebrates, including kangaroos, wallabies, koalas and wombats as well close to 100 varieties of birds and many rare plants and trees. Because of this natural bounty, the focus of the resort is on wildlife exploration and appreciation. Field guides greet guests upon arrival, and the nightly rate of each suite includes not only all three meals but two daily activities such as a wildlife tour, guided walk, trail ride or nocturnal safari. Among the additional

adventure options are golf, shooting, fly fishing or heli-fishing, photography expeditions and canyoning. Kids can partake in archery, stunt-kite flying, even bushcraft (or wilderness survival). Every suite has a small private pool and comes with mountain bikes.

Getting There: The resort can arrange a car transfer (3-hour drive) or helicopter (50-minute flight) from Sydney.

Pretty Beach House, Killcare, New South Wales

Why Go: To stay in a deluxe tree house in the Australian bush with beaches nearby and a butler and chef on call. This is Sydneysiders' version of Big Sur's Post Ranch Inn.

What It Is: This former private retreat, set on seven acres of

eucalyptus forest on the edge of a national park, is one of the world's smallest five-star hotels. There are only three guest bungalows. There's a full-time staff to arrange activities and a gourmet chef to prepare meals. The main house has a pool with views of the Brisbane Waters. Dinner is served in the great room, but most guests hole up in their cabin hideaways, which have full living rooms, kitchenettes and outdoor hot tubs.

Indagare Tip: For families who want to be on the beach, the owners have just opened the wonderful Bells Beach House, a three-bedroom house right on Killcare beach.

Getting there: A two-hour drive from Sydney or a half-hour seaplane flight.

Capella Lodge, Lord Howe Island, New South Wales

Why Go: For amazing snorkeling and diving on a tiny island that has glorious weather even when it's cyclone season on the Great Barrier Reef.

What It Is: The only luxury option on this Pacific island, Capella resembles a simple California beach house with a wing of nine guest rooms. Views from the windows, though, are pure tropical-island paradise with volcanic peaks, lagoons and palm trees. Meals are served in the main lodge with every table facing floor-to-ceiling windows that front a stunning sea view.

Bedrooms have wooden decks and spare beachy furnishings. Guests are given bikes to ride to the different beaches, where barbecues can be ordered for lunch. The highlight of our vacation: snorkeling on stunning reefs with sharks, rays, sea turtles and blizzards of colorful, tropical fish.

Getting There: Lord Howe Island is about a two-hour flight from Sydney.

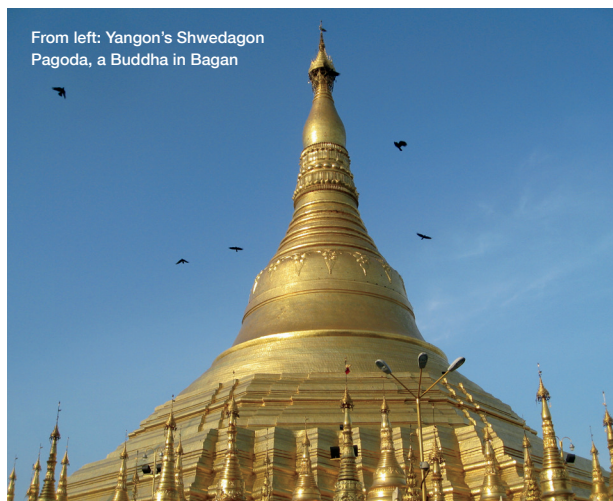


Pretty Beach House

To read more about these lodges and a number of others, including Southern Ocean Lodge on Kangaroo, and for a three-day itinerary in Sydney go to [Australian Lodges](#).

Myanmar Now

The country is finally emerging from its troubled past as one of southeast Asia's most fascinating destinations. **Simone Girner** gets the lay of the land.



From left: Yangon's Shwedagon Pagoda, a Buddha in Bagan



Myanmar in 2012 is an outrageous shape-shifter. Before I left on my trip to this Southeast Asian country earlier this year, I read extensively about it, not least because its appalling history of military dictatorship demands due diligence from travelers. But owing to how fast things have been changing, nothing I read actually prepared me. Almost everything I experienced—from the bustling street scene in Yangon to the serene temples of Bagan—was more complex, vibrant and profound than I had imagined. It was the type of journey in which your brain is active all the time, because everything you see invites further questions. If things continue to change as rapidly

as they have, it will be different to visit even six months, let alone years, from now.

Since the controversial and contested elections in 2010, Myanmar—under sanctions from the U.S. and Europe for decades—has been steadily moving towards democratic change. What began as a whisper of transformation has grown louder, as timid but extraordinarily hopeful signs point toward a lasting shift. The release of longtime opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi, known as the Lady, from house arrest in 2010 was a marker, as was the November 2011 state visit by Hillary Clinton, the first by a U.S. official in more than fifty years. Just one year ago locals were not able to access online

blogs, could not exchange U.S. dollars and could get arrested for distributing pictures of the Lady or her party, the National League for Democracy (NLD). On my recent trip to Myanmar, I met residents who have Facebook pages; I was able to pay with U.S. dollars even at some smaller markets (although the local currency is preferred); and I visited the NLD's headquarters in Bagan, reopened in January, where I purchased T-shirts and cards bearing the Lady's portrait. There was an overwhelming sense of history being made right now.

Most first-time itineraries will include time in Yangon, Bagan, Mandalay and Inle Lake. An obvious add-on is beach time in Ngapali, home to a number of nice thatched-

roof resorts. Inle Lake is described by many as the true highlight of a trip. Its floating markets, houses on stilts, water-encircled temples and fishermen working on age-old boats are breathtaking.

Bagan are another absolute must. Viewing its temple-strewn fields produces an effect similar to seeing the canals of Venice or the pyramids of Egypt for the first time. They make you long for the gift of a poet or the skill of a painter—anything to capture their otherworldliness. This effect is magnified when you're wafting across the expanse in one of Balloons Over Bagan's

cranberry-colored hot-air confections, which rise at dawn and journey silently over temples, stupas and pagodas just as they cast off their misty shrouds and gleam golden in first light.

During my trip, I spent three nights in Bagan on the *Road to Mandalay*, the comfortable boat run by Orient-Express, which cruises up the Irrawaddy River to Mandalay and beyond, into Myanmar's wild northern hills.

Bagan, about a two-hour flight from Yangon, is divided into Old and New Bagan. The former includes fields littered with some 3,000 pagodas and

“Everything I experienced in Myanmar, from Yangon's busy street scene to Bagan's quiet temples, was more vibrant and profound than I had imagined.”

temples. Some have names, parking lots, tourists who arrive in buses and vendors hawking lacquer and sarongs, while others are completely deserted. Two of the main ones to visit are the striking white Ananda Temple, with its four massive Buddhas carved out of teak, and the Shwesandaw Paya, a perfect perch from which to view the sunset (those with vertigo should steer clear). Incidentally, thanks to a new tourism initiative, there's Wi-Fi at the bigger temples, a somewhat comical merging of ancient and modern beliefs.

But the real joy, especially if you have a few more days in Bagan, is exploring the many small and unnamed temples housing Buddha sculptures, paintings and murals. Some of the most magnificent treasures are barely marked, like Lok Anteih Pann Temple, one of my favorites, in which ▶▶



a beautiful sitting Buddha presides over a small room covered floor-to-ceiling in colorful murals depicting his life. The old temple keeper handed us flashlights and encouraged us to explore the scenes. It felt like the part in *The English Patient* where Kip hoists Hana into the vaults of the deserted chapel, getting her close to the most exquisite of religious murals.

It remains to be seen if these treasures will remain this accessible and unchecked once large numbers of tourists start arriving (in one abandoned monastery, our guide showed us an exquisite, museum-worthy stone urn dating to the 11th century, which literally stood by itself in an empty

space). But for now, one of the great pleasures is exploring on foot or by bike and taking in the history, one pagoda, Buddha and gilded stupa at a time.

For me, Myanmar was the trip of a lifetime. There were big experiences, like seeing Aung San Suu Kyi at the Yangon airport and visiting the golden Shwedagon Pagoda. But it's the small moments that got under my skin and that stay with me: the smiles exchanged with locals at a market; the visit to an orphanage run by an engaged, beautiful, 35-year-old monk; discovering floor-to-ceiling murals in a hushed temple.

One of my guides told me about the Buddhist belief that the more lost you are, the

more alms you get. This was certainly true of my trip. I lost myself in Myanmar—and am richer for it today..

Why Go Now: To catch a destination in midst of change. Virtually overnight, Myanmar is on the top of everyone's travel lists, but because the hotel scene remains modest, it's also a place that cannot accommodate huge numbers of tourists—yet. (This is sure to change: at the Yangon airport, a driver was holding up a sign for “Mr. Zecha,” and doubtlessly the city's gorgeous, crumbling colonial buildings are of great interest to the Aman's founder.) It's not so undiscovered that you will have major sites to yourself,



From left: A vendor at a market in Bagan; Shwedagon Pagoda during sunset

but in Bagan a “busy” temple means five tour buses, and in Yangon you can walk into any top restaurant and get a table. The trickiest thing is actually booking such coveted hotels as Governor’s Residence and a cabin on the *Road to Mandalay* (see sidebar).

Who Should Go: Curious travelers who are eager to experience the treasures of historic Burma and to understand the complexities of modern-day Myanmar. The important religious sites (temples, pagodas, reclining Buddhas) may bear some similarities to those in Thailand, Cambodia and Malaysia. But it’s the country’s present-day story and current changes that make it so unique. In an op-ed piece for the *International Herald Tribune*, a friend of mine described Myanmar as both “beautiful and tragic.” One hopes that in coming years, the tragic will fade into the historic, while the beautiful will be developed thoughtfully and carefully. Both of these developments depend greatly on tourists who “get it.” Travelers who don’t do well with last-minute itinerary changes and nonconnectivity and people who don’t have a sense of adventure should probably pass on Myanmar for now. ■

Read the complete report, including tips on mapping out an itinerary, on Indagare. For help planning a trip to Myanmar, contact Indagare’s Bookings Team: 212-988-2611.



Governor's Residence, Yangon

Spotlight: Staying in Style

One of the trickiest parts of planning a trip to Myanmar is getting a spot in the right hotels or best river cruises, since the number of high-end options is limited. The most luxurious way to visit is by going through Orient-Express, the company that runs the **Governor’s Residence** (read Indagare’s review), in Yangon, and the **Road to Mandalay** (read Indagare’s review), a wonderful cruise boat that travels the Irrawaddy, mostly between Bagan and Mandalay.

One of the loveliest hotels in Southeast Asia, the **Governor’s Residence** is tucked away in the city’s embassy district. It’s just a 5-minute drive from downtown Yangon, with such tourist sites as Scott Market, but the beautifully landscaped **Governor’s Residence** feels miles away. The other option in Yangon is the **Strand Hotel** (read Indagare’s review), the historic property that sits in downtown Yangon. It’s a fine choice if the Governor’s Residence is booked or if you have a single night in Yangon and want to be in the center of the sightseeing.

The route between Bagan and Mandalay is best navigated aboard the **Road to Mandalay**, whose

82 spacious cabins occupy two of the four decks. Interiors are lovely, with beautiful fabrics, comfortable beds and spacious bathrooms. The upper deck has a small swimming pool. What really sets the **Road to Mandalay** apart are its excursions, led by excellent guides and kept to about ten to twelve people. The culture is also brought close to travelers through a series of on-board lectures and postdinner performances.

Although neither Bagan nor Inle Lake have big-name five-star hotels, there are a few options, including the **Inle Princess Resort**, which overlooks Inle Lake’s eastern shore, and the **Hotel at Tharabar Gate** or **Thiripitsaya Sanctuary Resort**, in Bagan. Choosing an accommodations is an example of how due diligence is demanded from travelers, who should research their hotel’s possible military ties.

Preview: Insider Trip 2013

Indagare is planning on hosting a special Insider Trip to Myanmar early 2013. The itinerary has not yet been confirmed but will include time in Yangon, Bagan, Inle Lake and Mandalay. As space is extremely limited, spots are first offered to alumni of previous Insider Trips, followed by Connoisseur members. For more information, email info@indagare.com.

Cabo Anniversary

Indagare member K.D. and her husband celebrated an anniversary weekend in Cabo at the Capella Pedregal. Here are their impressions.



My husband and I have celebrated our anniversary for many years in Cabo. We have always stayed at the **One & Only Palmilla**, but since we could go only for a long weekend this year, we decided to try **Capella Pedregal**. The entrance is magical: guests walk through a tunnel, carved into a mountain, which is complete with chandeliers. We stayed in one of the Estrella suites and left feeling that these are the best rooms at the hotel. One lovely feature was the fire pit at the edge of the plunge pool. Because nights were cool, the fire pit allowed us to sit on the deck in the lounge chairs and gaze at the stars. The setting of the hotel is beautiful and unique, as it is on the Pacific Ocean side of the beach, to the west of the famous rock formations.

We had arranged to use the Capella's boat, but when we arrived we were told it was not available. Management tried to find alternatives, but couldn't find anything comparable, so we opted out of the excursion. A highlight was dining at El Fallon seafood restaurant, which has a most beautiful, cliffside setting. Guests should be sure to make reservations far in advance.

All in all, I cannot say anything really negative about Capella, and we are glad we experienced it, but Palmilla really stands out with its attention to details. The staff there always planned special anniversary surprises during our stay—for example, remembering our favorite drinks and welcoming us at our room door with these and creating unique experiences not on the concierge's menu. We also drove up to **Rancho Pescadero**, a great place with a cool vibe. Kids under eighteen are not allowed, which is unfortunate as this would be the perfect family spot in Cabo. ■

For help planning a trip to Cabo, contact Indagare's Bookings Team: 212-988-2611.

Defining Cabo: Americans just say "Cabo," but the resort of Los Cabos, Mexico, encompasses two towns: San José del Cabo and Cabo San Lucas. The latter is the area's party capital. San José del Cabo has a more laid-back vibe; many of its pretty 18th-century adobe houses have been converted into galleries, restaurants and shops. Some of the region's best beaches, and most of its top resorts and golf courses, are located along the Corridor, the eighteen-mile stretch of land separating the two Cabos.

Easter Island Mysteries

Home to dozens of unsolved mysteries, the island known as Rapa Nui delights and stumps **Amelia Osborne**. Here's what to expect from this remote destination.



Easter Island's famous stone *moai*

We're living in an era when every morsel of information is just a Google search away. But I recently visited a place—probably one of the last on earth—where there are more questions than answers, which not even your iPhone can help decipher. Easter Island is the ultimate enigma, and after a recent visit and much reading, I'm still trying to figure the place out. Even my tour guide started our first day together by saying about the island, “No one really knows the truth. We can choose our own answers.”

Theories about Easter Island abound, few of which have been fully confirmed or disproved. Even its name is debated: the moniker comes irrelevantly from a Dutch sailor who stumbled on the island on Easter Sunday in 1722. The ancient native name, *Te Pito te Henua* (which

can paradoxically translate as either “the navel of the earth” or “the end of the earth”) has been replaced by contemporary locals with Rapa Nui. These inhabitants themselves are referred to as Rapanui and speak a language called (you guessed it) Rapanui. Chile, the country that Easter Island technically belongs to, calls it *Isla de Pascua*. This wide choice in names can lead to some confusion. Even at check-in at the Lima airport, the airline clerk seemed unable to understand “Easter Island,” offering, with a smile, flights to “Miami—or Los Angeles?”

The island's biggest questions revolve around its famed stone heads, or *moai*. How could a culture with so little material goods, focus not on survival but on creating incredibly intricate and poignant monuments? How were they carved? How were the statues, some of which



stand thirty feet high and weigh up to eighty tons, transported? Why did production stop? Why are so many broken and abandoned?

There is no shortage of possible explanations: the statues were built to honor ancestors and to watch over the island (which is why they all face inland, and not out to sea); they were carved from a volcanic quarry with stone tools (metal was not introduced to the island until recently); the *moai* were then “walked” using a complicated rigged pulley and lever system, or they were rolled atop multiple tree trunks (the wheel also did not make it to the island until Europeans first visited, in the 18th century). Construction halted because of a revolution or the arrival of Europeans or widespread disease (we do know the pause was sudden and final, as evidenced by abandoned tools left by unfinished statues). Statues are knocked down from weather-related incidents, during revolutions or when they fell and broke during transport.

When I showed a friend back home my photographs, she asked how on earth I was able to get so close to these archeological treasures,

a remark that reminded me of a modern-day mystery: the island has no fences, ropes or lines guarding the 1,000 statues. The only thing keeping visitors from climbing on the heads is the hushed nature of the setting. The respect the *moai* elicit is so strong that visitors seem to fall under their spell. I certainly was incredibly struck by the statues, returning to view them multiple times, almost as if I couldn’t believe what I was seeing.

As mysterious as the *moai* are the island’s remoteness and intricate culture itself. The longer you visit, the more questions arise: How did the people get here? What brought them there? Where did all the vegetation and animals come from? (As a volcanic island, Easter Island was not part of the ancient Pangaea supercontinent, thus everything had to arrive via wind, bird, sea or ship.) How did a culture, with rich complexity (with even its own language, *rongo*), develop without outside inspiration, thousands of miles from civilization? And tragically, the final question: what actually caused the culture’s collapse?

The island's bareness adds to its eerie feeling and prompts scientists' favorite question: where did all the trees go? Studies have shown that the island was forested at one point, but it now has very few trees, resembling the bogs of Ireland more than a subtropical island. Much to my delight, along these exposed and rolling hills, roam an estimated 10,000 wild horses, adding another enigmatic element to the landscape. (This number is made more significant when considering that the human population is currently only 5,000.)

My visit passed in what felt like a dream, filled with breathtaking vistas and rich folklore. On my first day on the island, we were told

that an older man had died, leading a local to comment that there would be a great rain soon: "There always is after a death, as the spirit is passing." If I had any doubt, the next day saw a ferocious and unseasonable rainstorm. By the end of my five days on Easter Island, I had stopped asking questions starting with "how" and "why," having come to appreciate the island for what it is, not how it came to be. Questions outweighing answers is what makes Easter Island so unique. Just don't ask Siri about it. ■

Read more about Easter Island at [Indagare](#). If you are planning a trip to Chile, including the Atacama Desert, Patagonia and wine country, contact our Bookings Team: bookings@indagare.com.

Easter Island Tip Sheet

"No one arrives on Easter Island by accident. It is on the way to nowhere and it is next to nothing."
~Jennifer Vanderbes.



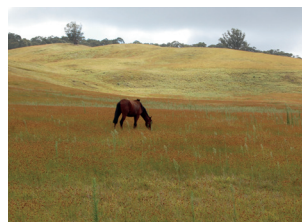
Getting There/When to Go

Easter Island is the world's most remote inhabited island, located halfway between Tahiti and Chile. LAN is the only airline serving Easter Island, flying from Lima, Santiago or Tahiti. Connecting in Lima takes three hours off overall flying time for those traveling from the U.S. The island's temperature rarely dips below 60 or rises above 80 degrees and constant breezes keep away any humidity. The most popular time to visit is between October and April, with May seeing more rain. Tapataí Festival runs from the end of January until the beginning of February.



Where to Stay

Explora Rapa Nui (read *Indagare's* review) is the ultimate luxury option on Easter Island. Part of the acclaimed Explora portfolio, the beautifully secluded lodge has stylish rooms in two ranch houses with floor-to-ceiling windows. The staff takes care of every detail, from gourmet meals to expeditions and adventures. **Hanga Roa Eco Village & Spa** (read *Indagare's* review) is an alternative for visitors who would like a bit more freedom to make their own plans. Located in town, the property has luxurious accommodations and an incredible spa.



Who Should Go

Although a trip to Easter Island is an ideal family holiday, the historical aspects of all tours, along with a lack of kid-friendly establishments and activities, makes the destination much better suited to couples, friends and families traveling with older children (twelve and above). The island is also popular as a stop for honeymooners and romantics heading to Tahiti for an escape. The ideal visit length is four nights, in order to see all the sights. The time difference from New York is only one hour, so Americans benefit from having zero jet lag.

Berlin Chic

The German capital has long been a hotbed of design and style. **Simone Girner** outlines three neighborhoods to know.



Clockwise, from top: Andreas Murkudis' cool showroom; a courtyard in the Hackesche Höfe; Berlin's skyline.

Berlin is a chameleon-like destination, which transforms depending on who is visiting. History buffs, art connoisseurs, style mavens and families with kids will all be happy here. And shoppers. Even though the scene is not on par with Paris or London, the independent boutiques and ateliers afford an exciting spree of discovery. Here are three neighborhoods to hit.

Eastern Berlin: Mitte's August & Mulakstrasse

Around the Hackesche Höfe is a great neighborhood

where shops, galleries and friendly restaurants and cafés converge. The best shopping streets in this area are Alte and Neue Schönhauser Strassen, Steinstrasse, Mulakstrasse, Torstrasse and Auguststrasse. Some Indagare favorites are Lala, C'est Tout, RSVP, Schwarzhogerzeil and Konk, but new ones are constantly opening, so it's really an area where it's best to wander rather than following a list. Take a break as such spots as Clärchens Ballhaus, The Barn, Café Oliv, Eismanufaktur and Barcomis nearby.

Eastern Berlin: Mitte's Hackesche Höfe

Trendy shoppers grumble that the Hackesche Höfe, a series of eight interconnected courtyards, have become too commercial, but for one-stop shopping for local finds they are great fun. The Art Nouveau grandeur is particularly striking in the first courtyard, which is covered in glazed blue tiles. Shops include fashion, accessories, food and art, all locally designed and produced (in some cases by artisans who are sitting in their ateliers at the back of the shops). Don't



miss Hoffnung, an incredible leather emporium; Freitag, a whimsical shop dedicated to attractive rain wear in Courtyard 5; and Promobo, an artisans collective that carries everything from trendy fashion to gorgeous leather bags. After a shopping spree here, exit the Höfe on the Sophienstrasse side and have a coffee at Barcomi's.

Western Berlin: Charlottenburg

The area around the Kurfürstendamm, known as Ku'Damm, has some of the

city's most upscale shops. They are not as conveniently located in the same condensed neighborhood, as some of the shopping in Mitte, but if you are patient, you can find some good buys here. Mommsenstrasse is worth seeking out for the sleek flagship of German designer Jil Sander on Ku'Damm. KaDeWe (Kaufhaus des Westens) is Berlin's version of the Galeries Lafayette or Harvey Nichols. You won't find anything novel on the fashion, accessories and beauty floors, but it's worth exploring the immense

Spotlight: Andreas Murkudis

The high-end boutique of concept store impresario **Andreas Murkudis** used to occupy a choice courtyard near the Hackesche Höfe. In 2011, Murkudis moved the entire production into an underdeveloped area.

Now located in a former newspaper printing press, Murkudis' emporium is as cool and cutting-edge as ever, with a well-edited assortment of fashion, accessories, design and beauty products. It's all extremely high-end and both design- and fashion-conscious men and women will be happy here.

Take a taxi to this formerly edgy neighborhood about which *The New York Times* wrote: "Murkudis is essentially taking out an insurance plan on his own cachet, in this case one with a 15-year lease attached. By the time it expires he'll be 64, and if all goes as he expects, the neighborhood will have risen up to meet him." *Potsdamer Strasse 77-87, Haus E; (49) 30-680-798306.*

culinary offerings on the sixth. As someone who has explored food courts in New York, Tokyo and Paris, I didn't think I would be impressed, but KaDeWe holds its own with the best. The chocolate section alone is worth the journey (you can pick up fabulous gourmet gifts here), and the seventh floor café, with an enormous window overlooking the city, is a good place to refuel with a bite and drink. ■

[Read the complete Berlin Destination Report, including where to stay and eat and what museums and galleries not to miss, on *Indagare.com*.](#)

Seaside Styles

Souk experts **Anna Lonergan** and **Monique Brendel** select the season's most inspired fashion finds, many more can be found on the Indagare Souk.



Drift into Summer

Whether you're anticipating beachtime or boating in the Mediterranean, no other season brings as much joyful expectation. Henry James said it best: "Summer afternoon, summer afternoon; to me those have always been the two most beautiful words in the English language." Here's to a stylish celebration of summer.

Photo (left) by Luca Trovato



From India: Melissa's Finds

The 100% cotton Dhurrie is the perfect beach bag. The leather straps are designed to carry a towel. Contact the Indagare Souk for details to purchase. \$85



From Istanbul: Harelrique

Simple and elegant, this kaftan is made from exquisite, Italian handkerchief linen that's block-printed with a distinctively Turkish floral design called Harem Flower. \$380



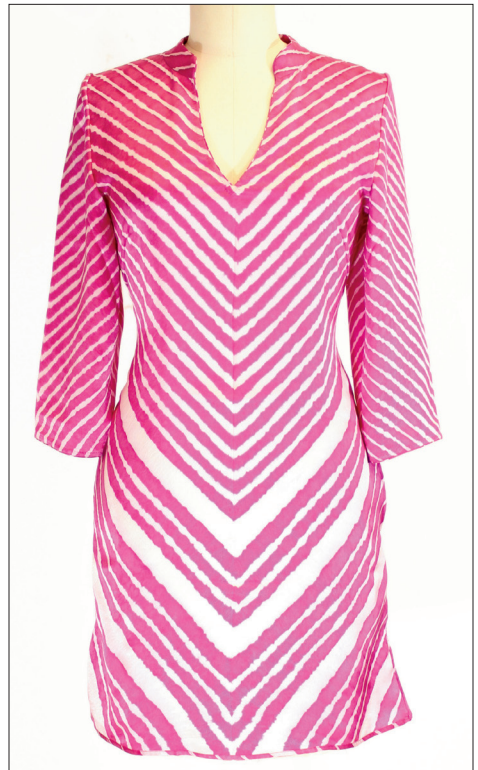
From Brazil: Cecilia Machado for Indagare
 Contact the Indagare Souk for details to purchase. \$285-\$350



From: Kenya: Adele Dejak
 These brass hoops, made in Kenya by a team of local artisans, feature dyed cow bone and brass discs. \$55



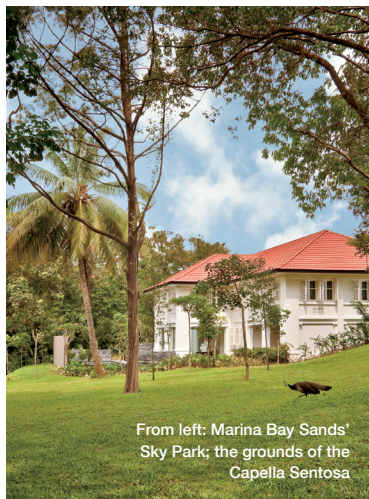
From: Kenyan Artisans
 These functional, chic towels are made out of classic cotton Kikoy fabric and backed with fine terry cloth. Contact the Indagare Souk for details to purchase. \$50



From: India: Bazaar 28
 Bazaar 28's colorful Leheriya tunics are hand-dyed and made out of silk; the word *leheriya* comes from waves. Contact the Indagare Souk for details to purchase. \$299

Three Days in Singapore

Simone Girner spends a long layover in the fast-transforming city state and discovers its best hotels, restaurants and sites along the way.



From left: Marina Bay Sands' Sky Park; the grounds of the Capella Sentosa

Long treated as Southeast Asia's stepchild—handsome, overachieving and trying too hard—Singapore is often portrayed as a fly-through site. But considering what an extraordinary gateway the city is, with direct flights to most of Southeast Asia and the many different experiences it offers, Singapore is perfect for an extended layover, both pre- and post-trip. Here is a taste of the city in three days, whether you're using the time to get used to the climate and time zone or unwinding after a busy travel schedule.

DAY 1

Morning: Start at the **Marina Bay Sands**, the supersized resort-casino-hotel-restaurant complex that cost \$8 billion

and opened in Marina Bay in 2010. Its three massive towers are connected on top by a long flat platform; the building is already a landmark of the new Singapore. Make a reservation for brunch at Justin Quek's **Sky on 57**. Afterward, continue to the Sky Park, designed by Moshe Safdie, which has incredible 360-degree panoramas. Continue to the terrific **Arts Science Museum**, housed in a structure that resembles an open flower.

Lunch: Take a taxi to the **Fullerton Bay Hotel** and have lunch at chic **Lantern** on the roof. Those looking for a more sophisticated dining experience might opt for **Clifford**, the hotel's sleek French brasserie on the ground floor.

Afternoon: Take a cruise down **Singapore River** to get a sense of the city's layout along the harbor. Afterward, head to the **Fullerton Hotel's** small but excellent gallery, which details the area's history in photographs and artifacts. Or head to the nearby **Ritz-Carlton** for an iPod-led art tour (the hotel has some 4,000 pieces of contemporary art).

Dinner: If you have never been, head over to the **Raffles' Long Bar** for a cocktail. The ubiquitous Singapore Sling can be quite sweet (opt for the one laced with fresh passion fruit purée). Before or after, explore the **Raffles Shopping Arcade**. From there, foodies can walk to the **Makansutra Hawker Center**, by the marina. It's a

good “starter hawker,” thanks to the select number of stalls and the many boards explaining the types of dishes and street food traditions.

DAY 2

Morning: Start with a stroll around **Fort Canning**, a serene expanse of green in the middle of the city’s business district. Then head to the **Peranakan Museum**, devoted to a culture that’s found only in Singapore, Malacca and Penang and that is known for beadwork, lace *kebayas* and fiery food.

Lunch: Dine at **True Blue**, the Peranakan restaurant adjacent to the museum. Those who prefer Western-style food can walk to the nearby **Fifty-Three**, which has an intimate, refined vibe.

Afternoon: Shoppers should head to **Haji Lane**, a tiny street in the Kampong Glam (Arab) neighborhood, which is home to independent fashion boutiques. Continue to explore Little India (a 10-minute walk or 5-minute taxi ride away). For more upscale shopping, take a taxi to **ION Orchard**, a mall of Asian proportions: 400 stores on eight floors.

Nature enthusiasts can take the Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) or a taxi to the excellent **Botanic Garden** whose orchids are simply breathtaking.

Dinner: Everyone loves relative newcomer **Wok & Barrel**, in the city’s Duxton Hill neighborhood, which serves traditional Singaporean food in a trendy setting. Before or after, have a drink at **Prelude Wine Bar**, a few doors down. Alternatively, you can have an early dinner before heading to the **Singapore Zoo Night Safari**, an open-air zoo that is open only at night and holds more than 1,000 animals.

DAY 3

Check in to the **Capella Sentosa** resort, for a day of relaxing, pampering and beach time. Don’t be shocked when pull-

ing in to Sentosa: the island, just a 15-minute drive from the business district, holds a massive Universal Studio park. But the Capella is a beautiful, serene resort. Housed in an old colonial building with a sweeping annex designed by Sir Norman Foster, it has verdant landscapes, a tiered layout that spills to the beach and one of the city’s top spas where you can get over jetlag or prepare for the long-haul flight home. ■

Read more about Singapore on Indagare. Contact Indagare’s Bookings Team for help with a trip to Singapore and other Southeast Asian destinations: 212-988-2611.

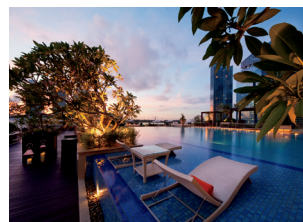
Tale of Two Hotels

These stunning properties embody Singapore style: one old-world, the other hip and contemporary.



The Grand Dame Raffles

⊕ Like the Mandarin Oriental in Bangkok and the Peninsula in Hong Kong, the Raffles Singapore is one of those legendary properties that have set the bar when it comes to Asian hospitality. Interiors throughout are grand, with reproduction antiques, Oriental carpets and teak floors. But the real reason travelers have been loyal to this hotel for decades is the unmatched service. Each of the rooms has a dedicated butler on call twenty-four hours a day. 1 Beach Road; 65-6339-7650; Read Indagare’s review.



The Newcomer Fullerton Bay Hotel

⊕ Located in the marina, the Fullerton Bay boasts striking public spaces designed by Hong Kong-based interiors master André Fu. The bright public spaces strike a brilliant balance between understated and lavish. The modern but inviting aesthetic continues in the ninety-eight guest rooms, many of which have fabulous views of the harbor and South China Sea. The same views are the reason groovy rooftop lounge Lantern is the city’s newest hot spot. 80 Collyer Quay; 65-6333-8388; Read Indagare’s review.

Interview with a Travel Expert

Indagare's marketing director, **Barkley Hickox**, talks about inspired destinations, where to recharge in the Caribbean and why South Africa tops her travel to-do list.



What was your first really meaningful trip?

Istanbul, when I was fifteen. It was the most exotic place I had ever been, and I was at just the age when I could appreciate exactly what I was seeing and experiencing. Our summer trip coincided with my studies of the Ottoman Empire at school, and the ability to put each site into context made an enormous difference. Travel became relevant for the first time, and from then on it was an integral part of my life and education. Istanbul remains one of my favorite cities to this day.

What was a destination that left an impression more recently?

I traveled to India last September and was blown away by my experience. Every day was a new adventure. Full of colorful landscapes, aromatic cuisine and colossal sights, the country

is a feast for the senses. I came home longing to discover more about India and will return soon.

What destination do you consider a slam-dunk for travelers?

You can never go wrong with Italy, whether you're staying at a bed and breakfast in Tuscany or at the Hotel Cipriani in Venice.

What were some recent great discoveries?

There are so many: eating soft-shell crabs at Venetian haunt Alle Testiere; shopping at Good Earth in Bombay, where I bought an entire suitcase of bedding and housewares; sipping a Maracua sour by the fire at La Casona, my favorite hotel in Peru's Cusco; watching the twinkling lights on the surface of Udaipur's Lake Pichola; snacking on mahi mahi sandwiches at Blanchard's Beach Shack on Mead's

Bay, Anguilla; and the ambiance and design of Hong Kong's Upper House.

You are well traveled in the Caribbean. What are some of your favorites there?

I tend to get a bit stir-crazy when on a beach vacation, so “flop and drop” resorts do not really appeal to me. I gravitate toward islands that offer plenty of activities for day and night. I grew up going to Anguilla, which I feel has it

“I was blown away by my experience in India. Every day was a new adventure. Full of colorful landscapes, aromatic cuisine and colossal sights, the country was a feast for the senses.”

all: great beaches and food, a chic, relaxed vibe and friendly locals. St. Lucia feels like French Polynesia and is a go-to for a romantic weekend escape and mix of beach and jungle. The British culture on Barbados is formal, but the island offers fantastic restaurants and nightlife. I am embarrassed to say I have never been to St. Bart's, so it's high up on my wish list.

Where do you like to plan trips for members?

It is most fun to plan trips to the places you know inside and out and can speak passionately about. I could talk for hours about traveling through Italy, Turkey, Peru, France, India and the Caribbean. That said, one of the perks of working in this industry is that travel dreaming is a part of the job, and we often live vicariously through each other's travels. I have yet to visit Morocco, South Africa or Bali, but I have incredible insight into all three, thanks to my colleagues and our partners on the ground.

What are some trade secrets that most travelers don't know?

Travel is one of the areas where “doing it yourself” does not always pay off, at least for certain types of people. The leverage and scale

that agencies and operators provide can only benefit travelers, from insider knowledge during the planning phases, to better perks and pricing because of relationships with hotels and airlines. And using big online engines like Hotels.com, Expedia or Orbitz is a major travel don't. I can say from personal experience that these companies offer little relative value and a lot of downside risk. Users are the first to be bumped off flights and last to be upgraded at hotels.

What are some places you are dying to go?

I look forward to traveling to Bali this month. South Africa is also at the top of my wish list. It offers something for everyone: buzzing Cape

Town, food and wine, a dramatic coastline and unparalleled wildlife. In southern Africa, there are about twenty gorgeous properties I'd like to visit, including Cape Town's Ellerman House, La Residence, in Franschoek and Mombo Camp, in Botswana. ■





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“In Istanbul the remains of a
glorious past civilization are
everywhere visible...”

~Orhan Pamuk, Istanbul



Istanbul & Turkey Cheat Sheets

Melissa Biggs Bradley, Barkley Hickox and **Gisela Williams** map out the ultimate trip to Turkey, with its wealth of culture and stunning land- and seascapes.

In his evocative memoir *Istanbul*, Nobel Prize winner Orhan Pamuk writes powerfully about the place of his birth, beautifully capturing the city's modern-day complexities and historical riches: "In Istanbul, remains of a glorious past civilization are everywhere visible....The great mosques and other monuments of the city, as well as the lesser detritus of empire in every side street and corner—the little arches, fountains, and neighborhood mosques—inflict heartache on all who live among them."

Many visitors—first timers and habitués—would agree that Turkey's largest city indeed inflicts heartache, especially upon those who venture behind the (mosaic-tiled) scenes. From the ornate interiors of the many mosques to the buzzing rooftop bars with sweeping views, the city mesmerizes with its tug between cultural heritage and captivating energy. In fact, all across Turkey, whether touring the surreal land-

scapes of Cappadocia or the sparkling Aegean coast, a visitor is invited to partake in this exciting dialogue.

Turkey is extremely popular among the well-traveled members of the Indagare community. Families in particular appreciate the fact that a single trip can include a variety of activities, like boating on a traditional *gulet*, trekking in Cappadocia, and visiting Istanbul's treasures while based in a resortlike setting with a pool—key for summer travel. This Destination Report focuses on Istanbul, once a religious Mecca and the seat of four great empires, and includes Cheat Sheets on Bodrum and Cappadocia. Planning a successful trip hinges on a well-balanced itinerary and insider access. Contact our Bookings Team (bookings@indagare.com) to be put in touch with the best guides and on-the-ground operators, and to get more information on how to map out an itinerary.

INDAGARE CHEAT SHEET

Stay...in a resort-like setting on the Bosphorus (p.32)

Know...what to read and which films to watch (p.35)

Eat...with a view at Müzedeçanga and Mikla (p. 38)

Get...the shopping picks of Madeline Weinrib (p. 41)

See...the landscapes of Cappadocia from a balloon (p. 43)

Spend...the night in Bodrum's newest design resort (p. 48)

Learn...how to navigate the Grand Bazaar (p. 47)

Read...an interview with Haremlique's Caroline Koç (p. 52)

Shop...for artisan goods at these top shops (p. 50)

Explore...the best palaces, museums and sights (p. 40)

WHEN TO GO

Istanbul lies on the same latitude as Rome and Barcelona, so spring, early summer and the fall are the best times to go. Late July and August are prohibitively hot, while winters can be quite cold and gray, even occasionally snowy.

GETTING AROUND

A frequent topic of conversation, Istanbul traffic has become unbearable to the point that locals literally plan their days trying to avoid it. (The city doesn't have a convenient public transportation system.) For a visitor this means that everything from your hotel to sightseeing has to be well mapped out. Taxis are the most convenient way of getting around, but schedule in lots of time to arrive at your destination. The Turkish word for "road" is *caddesi*, which is abbreviated *cad*; *sokak* is "street" (abbreviated *sok*).

LAY OF THE LAND

The only city to span two continents (Europe and Asia), Istanbul is a sprawling metropolis that can be divided into three sections: the Old City, the New City and the Asian side, which is to the east of the Bosphorus. The European side is divided by the Golden Horn into the Old City (to the south) and the New City (to the north). The Old City is where the Ottomans built their walled town and contains the Topkapi Palace, Blue Mosque and Hagia Sophia, among other major sites. The New City contains the more

functional aspects of Istanbul, including most of the great restaurants, shopping and hotels. Galata Bridge connects the Old and New Cities.

BY NEIGHBORHOOD

Old City: The **Sultanahmet** area contains the most famous Istanbul sights, including Topkapi Palace, the Hagia Sophia and the Blue Mosque. The Four Seasons Sultanahmet is located in an old prison in this narrow and cobblestoned section of the ancient city. To the west and inland of Sultanahmet, **Beyazit** centers around the vast courtyard in front of Istanbul University. The Grand Bazaar is in this area. **Eminönü** sits at the base of the Galata Bridge (the main connector across the Golden Horn between the Old City and New City).

New City: Crossing north over the Galata Bridge, the first neighborhood a visitor will reach is **Karaköy**, which houses the Istanbul Modern art museum. Continuing north you come to **Beyoglu**, where the Pera Palace Hotel is located, as well as **Cukurcuma**, one of Istanbul's great shopping areas. **Nisantasi** and **Sisli** are the chic districts, with fabulous shopping streets that exude a New York's Fifth Avenue-meets-Greenwich Village atmosphere. The modern Park Hyatt hotel is found here. **Besiktas** is where the Four Seasons Bosphorus, the Çiragan Palace Kempinski and Taksim Square, with Ulus Park, are located.



TIP:

It's not easy to navigate your way through Istanbul's difficult-to-pronounce streets and multiple neighborhoods. Write down the address of where you're going and take a business card from your hotel. Keep in mind that the main neighborhoods, like Sultanahmet and Beyoglu, are on the European side of the city, so you'll rarely venture to the Asian side.



destination report: where to stay



From left: Four Season Bosphorus; Park Hyatt Istanbul; Çiragan Palace Kempinski



WHERE TO STAY

With tourism at an all-time high and so many fabulous hotels to choose from, visitors to Istanbul must think strategically about their travel goals and pick a base accordingly. Whether your trip's aim is sightseeing, lounging by a pool overlooking the Bosphorus, shopping for designer labels or brokering business deals, there is a hotel whose location and vibe corresponds with your travel needs. Many plugged-in travelers combine a stay in the Old City, home to the Hagia Sophia, the Blue Mosque, Topkapi Palace and the Grand Bazaar, with a few days of relaxing by the Bosphorus at a hotel with a pool that has more of a resort feel. *Here are some of Indagare's preferred options; many more recommendations can be found on the site.*

LUXURY

+ **Four Seasons Istanbul at the Bosphorus** A resort experience can be found at the New City outpost of the Four Seasons, which has an enviable location overlooking the Bosphorus. The property consists of three buildings (the Palace, the North Wing and the South Wing), each with very distinct characteristics. The original Palace, a beautiful, turn-of-the-

century Turkish villa with eighteen-foot ceilings, is the only building on the property whose rooms have unobstructed views of the Bosphorus. Flanking the Palace on either side are the North and South Wings, contemporary additions that hold additional rooms, conference centers and a remarkable 22,605-square-foot spa. The side wings have views of the "garden," unfortunately a loose term for the hotel's main entrance and driveway, so be sure to book in the Palace. There is no shortage of restaurants within a short drive of the hotel. In fact most of Istanbul's acclaimed eateries can be found in the New City. **Tip:** The only rooms with full sea views are the Palace Bosphorus or one of the larger suites. \$\$\$ *Besiktas; 28 Çiragan Cad.; (90) 212-381-40-00. Read Indagare's review.*

+ **Four Seasons Istanbul at Sultanahmet** Most of Istanbul's historical attractions are located in the Old City, and those who want to be steps away check in at the Four Seasons Sultanahmet. Converted into a hotel in 1992, the property began as an Ottoman prison and possesses a meaningful history and sense of place. Rooms display the simple elegance typical of the Four Seasons but include touches of local



From left: Four Seasons Bosphorus; Park Hyatt Istanbul; Ciragan Palace Kempinski

charm like traditional Turkish carpets and other crafts. Although not sun drenched, the rooms have views of neighboring cobblestone streets or the hotel's courtyard, regularly filled with seasonal flowers. One of the property's most appealing features is a roof terrace, open during the summer, where guests can enjoy cocktails and small plates. The terrace offers wonderful unobstructed views of the Sea of Marmara and the Hagia Sophia, which is truly spectacular lit up at night. Most of Istanbul's most important sights are within walking distance of the hotel, as are several noteworthy and good restaurants, so guests don't feel trapped on property for meals. This is the classic Istanbul hotel for first-time visitors. \$\$\$ *Sultanahmet-Eminönü; 1 Tevkiyhane Sok.;* (90) 212-402-30-00. *Read Indagare's review.*

Park Hyatt Macka Palace

If your goal is to shop and dine well, look no further than Istanbul's chic Nisantasi quarter (similar to New York's Fifth Avenue or Beverly Hills' Rodeo Drive). The Park Hyatt Macka Palace, located in the heart of this area, is within walking distance of some of the best shops and restaurants. A high-rise built in the

1920s, the hotel has a very sleek, contemporary aesthetic and is unlike any of the other five stars in the city. With only 90 rooms, it feels relatively intimate, and rooms are spacious, even at the lowest price category. Perhaps the best features are the bathrooms, many of which are set up as miniature hammams so guests can enjoy spa treatments from the privacy of their rooms. Each includes a traditional hammam basin, open-air rainfall shower, stand-alone bathtub and steam room. The Park Hyatt is a great option for second-time visitors or combined with the Sultanahmet for first timers. Even if you're not staying here, the rooftop lounge makes a great stop for shoppers. Steakhouse Prime, on the ground-floor, in one of the city's best restaurants. \$\$\$ *Nisantasi; 4 Bronz Sok.;* (90) 212-315-12-34. *Read Indagare's review.*

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GRAND



Çiragan Palace Kempinski

Opened in 1991, the Çiragan was one of Istanbul's original luxury properties. With its resort atmosphere, over-the-top suites and a stunning pool that appears to spill into the Bosphorus, the hotel was *the* place to stay for decades. The property is in need of a facelift, and travelers should check with Indagare's Bookings Team before making a reservation. The suites may appeal to someone seeking an old-world feel (à la New York's Waldorf-Astoria). \$\$\$.

Besiktas, 32 Çiragan Cad.; (90) 212-326-4646. Read Indagare's review.

BOUTIQUE

Pera Palace Hotel

Istanbul's most historic property, the Pera Palace was under massive renovation for four years before reopening in 2010. The building was designed in 1892 to receive passengers from the Orient-Express in grand style, and during its heyday, the hotel hosted an illustrious cast of characters (Agatha Christie penned *Murder on the Orient Express* while staying here). Today it's as much a hotel as a historic trove (one of the rooms was actually turned into a museum dedicated to Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, with many of the leader's personal belongings exhibited). An Indagare member wrote about her stay here: "The Pera may not have five-star services, but it offers something that no other Istanbul hotel does: a return to the Belle Époque." In 2012, Dubai's Jumeirah Hotel Group took over management of the property. \$\$\$.

Tepebasi Beyoglu; 52 Mesrutiyet Cad.; (90) 212-377-40-00. Read Indagare's review.

More hotel reviews and options can be found on [Indagare](#). Members can contact our [Bookings Team](#) to talk to a travel expert about what property is right for their next trip: 212-988-2611.

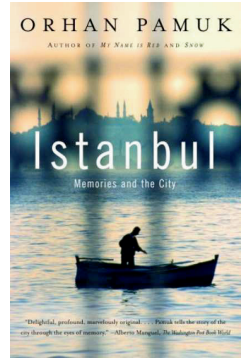
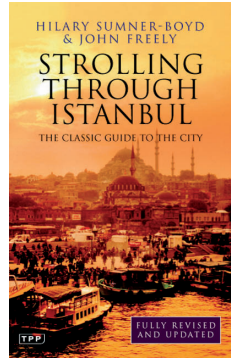
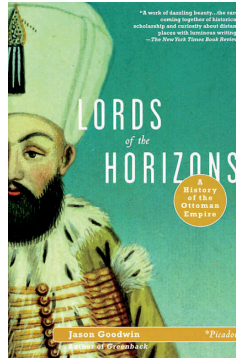
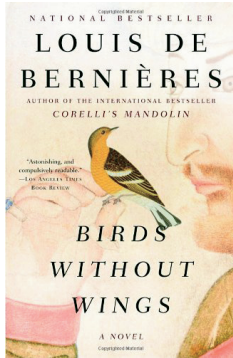
On the Horizon:

*In the coming year, Istanbul will see the opening of two highly anticipated luxury hotels, both interestingly owned by Asian parent companies: **Raffles** and **Shangri-La**. The former will be located in the mixed-use Zorlu Center, on the city's European shores in Zincirlikuyu, and will have one of the largest spas in the city as well as 180 rooms and suites, many with sweeping views of the Bosphorus. The Shangri-La, slated for an early 2013 debut, will be located in the Besiktas district, occupying a restored warehouse from the 1930s as well as a brand-new tower designed by Istanbul-based architect Piramit. Both hotels are sure to add style and comfort to Istanbul's already burgeoning hotel scene. They are the ones to watch for later this year and in early 2013.*



What to Read & View

"Life can't be all that bad, I'd think from time to time. Whatever happens, I can always take a walk along the Bosphorus." ~Orhan Pamuk



FICTION

***My Name Is Red*, Orhan Pamuk, 2001**

A mystery wrapped in a love story that is set in the 16th-century Ottoman Empire, this novel is a fascinating melding of history, religion, philosophy and setting.

***Snow*, Orhan Pamuk, 2004**

The clash between radical Islam and Western ideals witnessed by a Turkish poet who spent twelve years as a political exile in Germany.

***The Bastard of Istanbul*, Elif Shafak, 2006**

A novel focusing on Turkish national identity through the story of two families, one in Istanbul and the other in America.

***Birds Without Wings*, Louis de Bernières, 2004**

A fictional account of the founding of the Turkish republic, as seen through the life of a small village's citizens.

NONFICTION

***Istanbul: Memories and the City*, Orhan Pamuk, 2005**

The Nobel Prize-winning author's love song to his hometown.

***A Fez of the Heart*, Jeremy Seal, 1996**

An amusing account of one man's journey to fez factories.

***Istanbul: The Imperial City*, John Freely, 1996**

A well-researched, if slightly dry, history of the city from Byzantine times to the Turkish republic, with extensive notes on monuments and sights—think of it as a very in-depth Blue Guide.

***Atatürk: The Rebirth of a Nation*, John Balfour Kinross, 1971**

The definitive biography of the father of modern Turkey.

***Crescent & Star: Turkey Between Two Worlds*, Stephen Kinzer, 2001**

An examination by a former Istanbul bureau chief for *The New York Times* of modern Turkey in vivid anecdotes combined with thoughtful analysis.

***Lord of the Horizons*, Jason Goodwin, 1998**

An extremely readable history of the Ottoman Empire.

***Turkey Unveiled*, Nicole & Hugh Pope, 1997**

Since this book was written, Turkey and its place as a bridge between east and west have become even more significant. A very thoughtful examination by a husband-and-wife team of reporters.

***Strolling Through Istanbul*, Hilary Sumner-Boyd & John Freely**

A great walking guide to Istanbul that can be hard to track down but is

considered one of the best companions with which to explore the city.

***Istanbul and the Civilization of the Ottoman Empire*, Bernard Lewis, 1989**

A great portrait of the city's pivotal period, when Constantinople was overcome by the Ottomans, and a brief and readable primer on the city's history.

***Harem: The World Behind the Veil*, Alev Lytle Croutier, 1991**

A wonderful examination of the history and culture of the harem, including those at Istanbul's Topkapı palace. The author draws on her own background and extensive interviews. Lovely illustrations.

FILM

***Midnight Express*, 1978**

Alan Parker's gritty film about an American student who spent years in a Turkish prison for smuggling drugs.

***From Russia with Love*, 1963**

Most of this James Bond film was filmed in locations like the Basilica Cistern and Hagia Sophia.

***Gegen Die Wand (Head-On)*, 2004**

Set in Germany and Turkey, this tough film put Fatih Akin on the map as an acclaimed new voice in German-Turkish cinema. A lighter Akin film is *Soul Kitchen* (2009).



House Café Ortakoy

WHERE TO EAT

Most of Istanbul's best and trendiest restaurants are located in the New City, so you need to map out your dinners well and, as with most of Istanbul touring, plan for taxi time. That said, the city's scene has evolved into an exciting culinary destination, and visitors might have difficulty narrowing down their options. Many of the best restaurants also have incredible locations, be they along the Bosphorus or on rooftops with sweeping vistas of the romantic cityscape. *Here are some of Indagare's favorite places for dining; many more recommendations can be found on Indagare.*

Old City

Balıkçı Sabahattin

This fish restaurant, connected to the Armada Hotel, has tables set inside a historical Ottoman house. The traditional Turkish food is excel-

lent, making it a good choice for both lunch and dinner. It's within walking distance of the Blue Mosque and the Hagia Sophia. *Fatih; 1 Hasan Kuyusu; (90) 212-458-18-24.*

Fes Café

The original branch of this lovely lunch spot, serving excellent local cuisine, is near the Nuruosmaniye Mosque. The sister outpost is in the middle of the Grand Bazaar. *Sultanahmet; 27 Ali Baba Türbe Sokak; (90) 212-526-30-70.*

Hamdi

Renowned for both its southeastern Turkish dishes and its outrageous views, Hamdi is a mainstay for those touring the Old Town (it's within walking distance of the Spice Market). Make sure to book a table on the rooftop terrace, from which you feel you can reach out and touch the Galata Tower. *Fatih; 17 Tahmis Cad., Kalçin Sok.; (90) 212-528-03-90.*

“**Nardis Jazz Club** (www.nardisjazz.com), in the neighborhood of Galata, is a cool place to spend an evening listening to good music.”
-Denise Spencer, fashion designer



Karakol

Located in a former guard building, in the garden of the Topkapi Palace, Karakol is a good lunch option. Considering the location, it feels quite touristy, but the convenience and the quality of the food served make it a good option if you're touring in the area. *Topkapi Palace, Guard Post; (90) 212-514-94-94.*

New City

360

This restaurant-cum-lounge/nightclub still draws the city's young and fashionable even after years of operation. Avoid the restaurant, as the food is not memorable, but come for a drink and to marvel at the views. *Beyoglu; 163 Istiklal Cad., Misir Apartment, 8th floor; (90) 212-251-10-42.*

Club 29

Set on the hills overlooking the Bosphorus and the city, Club 29 has knockout views from just about every table. The decor is a sexy mix of Ottoman, Indian and Moroccan styles. In the summer the best tables are on the terrace; in the winter, floor-to-ceiling windows preserve the feeling of sitting on the edge of the cliff. (Note that it used to be called Ulus 29, and many still refer to it by its previous name.) *Ulus Park, Etiler; 71/1 Adnan Saygun Cad.; 90 (212) 358-29-29.*

Feriye Lokantasi

The slightly touristy vibe of this restaurant recalls that of iconic places like the 21 Club, in New York, and Tour d'Argent, in Paris, but it has an incredible location right on the edge of the Bosphorus. Turkish businessmen come here to close deals, and Stamboulis celebrate special occasions here, because of the unbeatable views

and predictably good food. *Ortakoy; 40 Çiragan Cad.; (90) 212-227-22-16.*

House Café

Soon after it opened in 2002, the funky House Café was so successful that it spawned several more locations throughout the city with interiors decorated by local design group Autoban. One of the best locations is Istiklal, with the adjacent atelier, which offers cooking classes. The menu is casual, with big salads and gourmet sandwiches. It's a good spot for breakfast, lunch or a lazy Sunday brunch. *Beyoglu; Istiklal Cad-desi Misir, Apt. 163; (90) 212-251-7991.*

Istanbul Modern Restaurant

With a unique industrial decor and an impressive view of the harbor, the restaurant in the city's acclaimed museum is one of the most stylish lunch spots, offering a predominantly Turkish menu and light fare. Hours of opera-



Mikla's rooftop lounge

destination report: where to eat

“Grab a copy of *Cornucopia* magazine when you get there. It’s a beautiful publication that focuses on the best of the best in Turkey. The editors have great taste and it’s always got wonderful new finds.” —Lisa Fine, co-founder Irving & Fine



tion are the same as the museum’s. *Karaköy; 4 Meclis-i Mebusan Cad., Liman Isletmeleri Sahasi Antrepo; (90) 212-292-26-12.*

Kösebasi

One of Indagare’s Istanbul insiders considers the Kösebasi restaurants the best in all of Turkey for kebabs. The original spot opened in 1995 in Levent (15 3 *Çamlık Sokak; 90-212-270-24-33*); the outpost in Nisantisi (5 *Bronz Sok.; Macka; 90-212-230-38-68*) is also recommended.

La Mouette

This restaurant is located on the roof of the Tom Tom Suites in the Beyoğlu district in the center of the New City. It’s run by two young chefs who previously worked at Mikla. The view is fantastic, and the cuisine, focused on locally sourced ingredients, is imaginative. *Beyoğlu; 18 Kaptan Sok.; (90) 212-292-44-67.*

Müzedechanga

It’s a thirty-to-forty-five-minute taxi ride from Sultanahmet, but Müzedechanga remains one of Istanbul’s best restaurants and is worth a visit. It’s drop-dead stylish, with midcentury Scandinavian pieces and Noguchi lamps, and the Bosphorus views are particularly compelling at night. *Emirgan; 22 Sakıp Sabancı Cad.; (90) 212-323-09-01.*

Mikla

Hotshot chef Mehmet Gürs’s Mikla is excellent and should be on every foodie’s top five list. Located in a glass-walled space on the top two floors of the Marmara Pera hotel, it delivers in terms of design, cuisine and vista—the view over the Golden Horn is breathtaking. Afterward, guests can have a cup of coffee or an aperitif outside on the white terrace on Mikla’s top floor. *Beyoğlu; Marmara Pera; 15 Mesrutiyet Cad.; (90) 212-293-56-56.*

Mimolett

An Istanbul Insider sums up Mimolett with: “very good food; bad location and atmosphere.” Foodies might still want to sample chef-owner Murat Bozok’s ambitious haute Mediterranean cuisine. The wine list mixes French vintages with newer Turkish labels, and the rooftop terrace is a good spot for an aperitif. *Cihangir; 55/A Siraselviler Cad.; (90) 212-245-98-58.*

Reina

An Istanbul institution, Reina is still the number-one club in Istanbul. It’s a large complex, including some restaurants, and continues to draw see and be seeners. The view of the Bosphorus and the bridge, with its changing colored lights, is spectacular. Dining options include gourmet Mediterranean, Japanese, Chinese or classic Turkish food, but most come to party after 10 P.M. when the scene turns more clubby. *Ortaköy; 44 Muallim Naci Cad.; (90) 212-259-59-19.*

Suada Club

Location. Location. Location. Suada is an island that floats between two continents in the middle of the Bosphorus. During the day, it offers a

Nikki Beach–type scene, while at night DJs transform it into a nightclub. It’s a great spot for cocktails. If you want to stay for dinner, choose Fish (*90-212-265-0158*) for well-prepared traditional Turkish seafood dishes. *Besiktas; 44 Muallim Naci Cad.; (90) 212-263-7300.*

Sunset Grill

Stamboulis tend to have their preferred hillside spots for a spectacular sunset viewing. Some choose Club 29, while others prefer Sunset Grill, in Ulus Park, which has a more modern, hip aesthetic. Sunset serves excellent Mediterranean food along with stunning vistas of the Bosphorus and beyond. *Kuruçesme; Adnan Saygun Cad., 2 Yol Sok.; (90) 212-287-03-57.*

X Restaurant

This trendy restaurant, on the roof of the Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts (IKSV), draws a high-end crowd with its well-executed Turkish-Mediterranean menu. *Beyoglu; 5 Sadi Konuralp Cad.; (90) 212-244-71-01.*

[More recommendations and tips on where to eat and drink, including top rooftops with a view, can be found on Indagare.](#)

Turkish Food and Drinks

Created over the centuries, the variations in Turkish cuisine are astonishing and reflect the multitude of cultures influencing it. Here are a few tips on what to try during your visit.

Meals begin with a *çorba* (soup) and various *mezes*, the Turkish version of tapas. These can include: *patlican* (eggplant); *sigara böregi* or *borek* (cheese in pastry, fried); *dolmalar* (stuffed vine leaves); and *köfte* (meatballs). The ubiquitous *kebaps* or *kabobs* (roasted or grilled meat) include *adana* (spicy lamb sausage),

döner (lamb cooked on a vertical pole, known elsewhere as a gyro), *sis kebab* (skewered meat and vegetables) and *iskender* (a sandwich of tomatoes, yogurt and lamb).

Desserts are delicious, among them baklava; *sütlac* (rice pudding); *halva* (a confection made of semolina, sugar and various nuts and flavorings) and *lokum* (Turkish delight). Many meals conclude with a shot of *raki*, the famous—and potent—Turkish alcohol made from raisins and anise. ~A.O.





From left: inside the Blue Mosque; the Istanbul Modern



WHAT TO SEE & DO

For history, art and culture buffs, Istanbul offers a trove of sites, most of which are best toured with a guide who can put the many centuries of different influences, conquerors and rulers into context. *Here are some of Indagare's favorite must-sees; more can be found on Indagare.*

Mosques

Part of an extensive complex, the famous **Blue Mosque**, named for the Iznik tiles covering its walls, sits across the park from the Hagia Sophia. Visitors should take the short walk to the nearby **Hippodrome**, the Byzantine Empire's largest chariot race grounds. **Hagia Sophia**, with stunning mosaic art, was built in AD 537 and remained Christendom's greatest church until the conquest of Constantinople in 1453 by Sultan Mehmet II who ordered it converted into a mosque. The **Suleymaniye Mosque**, built by the great Ottoman architect Mimar Sinan, dominates the third hill of old Istanbul. It's less ornate than the other imperial mosques,

inspiring reflection. Lovers of Iznik tiles should add the small **Rüstem Pasha Mosque** to their itinerary; its walls are even more memorable than those of the Blue Mosque.

Museums & Galleries

A trio not to miss is the **Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum**, the **Pera Museum** and the **Istanbul Modern**. The well-laid-out Islamic Arts Museum contains more than 40,000 artifacts, including ceramics, Koran cases, textiles, metalwork and illuminated manuscripts. The Istanbul Modern and Pera Museum both focus on more contemporary culture; the former, housed in an old customs warehouse by the Bosphorus, is an important stop for those interested in 20th-century Turkish art. The Pera does an amazing job of bringing international art to Istanbul. Subjects of previous exhibits have included Jean Dubuffet and Henri Cartier Bresson. As for galleries, art consultant Isabella Icoz says: "My go-to names are **Pi Artworks**, **Art Sumer**, **Galeri Non** and **Rampa**."

Palaces

Of the city's many lavish palaces, the magnificent **Topkapi** stands out. The residence of sultans for almost three centuries, it is located on a promontory jutting between the Bosphorus and the Golden Horn. You'll need at least a half day to explore all its treasures and have to get special tickets to visit the harem, which is one of the highlights. Another palace not to miss is the Imperial **Dolmabahce Palace**, which served as the last home of the Ottoman Sultans. French decorator Séchan (the mastermind behind the rooms of the opulent Opéra Garnier) designed the interiors.

Markets

The ninety-two streets of the famous **Grand Bazaar**, the largest and oldest covered bazaar in Turkey, with more than 4,000 shops, is a sight to behold (see page 47 for tips on how to navigate). The nearby **Egyptian Bazaar**, whose name refers to the herbs and spices imported from or through Egypt, is the best place to buy Turkish delight, dried fruit, exotic spices and herbs.

On the Water

As is the case in so many European cities, a great way to grasp the lay of the land is by seeing it from the water. In Istanbul, charter a private motor yacht to cruise on the Bosphorus, the narrow strait of water separating the Asian and European continents. Passing along the shores, travelers will view magnificent palaces, restored Ottoman villas, impressive fortresses and the waterside residences of Istanbul's elite.

Other Sights

The **Basilica Cistern** (or Sunken Palace) is a subterranean well located southwest of the Hagia Sophia. Built by Emperor Justinian in the sixth century, it has 336 beautiful support columns. The site was featured in the 1963 James Bond film *From Russia With Love*.



Madeline Weinrib: Istanbul Insider Picks



Sight not to Miss: **Topkapi Palace**, to see the beautiful Ottoman textiles.

Favorite City Secrets: **Rustem Pasa** is a small mosque designed by 16th-century Ottoman architect Sinan. The courtyard is really peaceful and it has the most beautiful 16th century Iznik tiles. The **Basilica Cistern**, an un-

derground cistern located at the Sultanahmet Square that was built in ad 532, is another wonderful place to visit.

Favorite Shops: **Gonul Paksoy**, whose owner designs beautiful clothing and accessories fashioned from antique Ottoman textiles; **Tulu**, a home-accessory store that has beautiful bedding designed by ex-pat Elizabeth Hewitt, as well as a wonderful selection of vintage Uzbek dishes; **Cocoon**, whose owner, Sheref, travels constantly and has a fabulous eye for antique textiles; and **Midnight Express**, a wonderful store to find fashion and accessories by edgy Turkish designers.

Best Spot for Daytime Relaxation: **Hotel les Ottomans**. It's a beautiful and romantic boutique hotel right on the Bosphorus that has a great spa and one of the best hamams in Istanbul.

Best for a Chic Lunch: **Salt**. This restaurant, in a beautiful building, is located in the artsy area of Beyoglu.

Best for a Big Night Out: **Anjelique** in Ortakoy, right on the Bosphorus. You should eat elsewhere, but go for drinks and dancing (after 11 p.m.)

Best for a Hip Scene: **360**. This is still the place for great views of Istanbul. I would recommend cocktails or even dinner outside.



Cappadocia Cheat Sheet

Imagine a Grand Canyon–esque landscape with networks of mountain caves and you begin to get a sense of the otherworldly beauty of Cappadocia.

Twenty years ago only well-traveled backpackers and Christian tourists seemed to make the trek to the cultural treasures of Cappadocia. But recently cave hotels and fine restaurants have popped up, luring well-heeled travelers to this picturesque place, 500 miles east of Istanbul. Because of its location along the trading routes between Europe, Asia and the Middle East, the area was important during the Hittite, Roman and Ottoman empires, and today it is home to a number of UNESCO World Heritage sites. Dozens of pigeon cotes have been carved into the honey-colored mountainsides, so they appear like giant beehives. Cappadocia still feels like a little-known treasure. You can hike beyond the tourist bus stops and find yourself alone in the haunting landscape or on a quiet street in a village when the sun goes down and the families spill out of their houses to trade gossip as they have for generations.

When to Go

The best times to visit Cappadocia are in the spring or early summer and fall. Winters can be severe, and summers can be extremely hot.

Getting There

Cappadocia has two airports: the larger Kayseri and the regional Nevsehir (service by Turkish Airlines). Flights from Istanbul take about one-and-a-half hours to either airport, but Nevsehir is closer to the Argos Hotel, as well as to such major sites as Goreme.

Where to Stay: Argos Hotel

Argos commands a stunning perch at the top of the town of Uchisar, which is known as the “peak of Cappadocia” because of its prime mountaintop position. The 34 rooms and suites are spread across four houses on different levels, but all are carved into the rock and have cave

like features. They are furnished with Turkish rugs and antiques. The hotel's two restaurants (the more casual Tiraz Café and the gourmet Seki) are so inviting, with glorious views and sleek seating areas, that once you arrive you may find it difficult to leave here to explore. Not surprisingly, some of the cave rooms are a bit dark, but this is the best place to stay in Cappadocia now. *Kayabasi Sokak, 50240 Uçhisar; (90) 384-219-31-30; www.argosincappadocia.com.*

What to See: Open-Air Museums

Goreme, Cappadocia's most famous cave town, has been turned into an open-air museum. It was one of the first two UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Turkey and is a must visit for any traveler to the region. In addition to the fresco-filled churches, there are refectories and monastic living quarters, most of which date from the 10th, 11th and 12th centuries. **Zelve** offers a more intimate view of ancient dwellings. Here, in what has been designated as a national park, you can explore abandoned caves cut into the rock face, as well as follow a hiking trail about a mile long that ends in a glorious church.

What to See: Kaymakli Underground Town

There are three dozen underground cities in Cappadocia, but most extensive of them is Kaymakli. Founded by the Hittites during second millennium B.C. and used for centuries as a hiding place for up to 5,000 people during foreign invasions, Kaymakli contains a network of tunnels that descend eight stories below the surface. Among the chambers you can visit (those with claustrophobia should stay away) are a church, kitchen, winery, granary and sleeping area.

What to Do: Hot-Air Ballooning

Together with Myanmar's Bagan and East Africa's Serengeti, Cappadocia is one of the best places for hot air ballooning, thanks to the otherworldly landscapes. For the best ballooning company in this area, contact Indagare's Bookings Team: 212-988-2611.

What to Do: Walking Kemil Valley

The valley that runs from Uchisar to Goreme is one of the most beautiful in Cappadocia. The five-kilometer hike from the hilltop town of Uchisar into Goreme takes about four hours, and along the way you will pass great views of dovecotes, fairy chimneys, farms and vineyards.

Where to Eat: Hanodasi

Although Hanodasi is definitely a tourist restaurant, the location inside a rock formation that resembles a giant honeycomb is very special, and the chef prepares delicious regional home cooking. *Goreme; (90) 384-271-23-92.*

Where to Take a Break: Tiraz Cafe

For a memorable lunch, book one of the outdoor tables at Tiraz Café, the terrace wine bar at the Argos Hotel. The view is spectacular, and the menu offers delicious snacks. *Kayabasi Sokak, 50240 Uçhisar; (90) 384-219-31-30.*

Indagare's Bookings Team can help members plan detailed Turkey itineraries, from simple day trips to multiday additional touring. Contact our team at 212-988-2611 or bookings@indagare.com.



WHERE TO SHOP

Istanbul lies at the crossroads of East and West, old and new, and those dichotomies are revealed in its creative wares. In short, it's one of the most exciting cities in the world for shopping. Whether you are seeking rare antique textiles, hand-stitched Anatolian carpets, trendy fur vests, suede jackets or museum-quality jewelry, it can be found here. And as in other capitals with lots of local craftsmen, it is possible to have custom products made while you are in town. Considering the traffic and approach your spree with a strategic shopping plan that focuses on specific neighborhoods.

By Neighborhood

Sultanahmet is home to the **Grand Bazaar**, a 400-year-old indoor shopping complex, where you can satisfy all your indigenous souvenir desires. The exclusive residential area of **Nisantasi**, part of the **Sisli** district, houses Turkey's best designers' boutiques. The neighborhoods of **Tesvikiye** and **Akaretler** are also part of this district. Special shops in other districts are worth the trek if you have more than a few days in town. The **Beyoglu** district comprises **Galatasaray** and **Curkurecuma**; the latter has lots of antique stores. **Bebek** is a historic neighborhood within the Besiktas district, on the shores of the Bosphorous.

Sultanahmet & the Grand Bazaar

Doktor Antik

If you swoon for the incredible textiles on view at the Topkapi Palace, head straight to Doktor Antik in the Grand Bazaar to buy very beautiful, very old—and very expensive—Ottoman textiles,

suzanis, and caftans. *Sultanahmet*; 9-12 İç Be-
desten Serif Aga Sok.; (90) 212-522-75-49.

Spice Bazaar

The best place in Istanbul to shop for nuts, spices and Turkish delight, or to just take photos of the bustling scene in this shopping complex, the second-largest after the Grand Bazaar. *Eminönü Meydani*.

Abdulla Natural Products

This shop in the Grand Bazaar carries thick handmade towels and beautiful cotton sheets, as well as pretty soaps and hammam products. *Sultanahmet*; 25 *Alibaba Türbe Sok.*; (90) 212-526-30-70.

Adnan & Hasan

Naturally, there are tons of carpet stores in the Grand Bazaar, but one classic source for high-quality Anatolian rugs is Adnan & Hasan. The owners will give you a rundown on the different types, techniques and regional patterns and offer fair prices and reliable shipping. If you want to make purchases for specific rooms, it is wise to bring exact measurements with you. *Sultanahmet*; 89-92 *Halicilar Cad.*; (90) 212-527-9887.

Örge Tulga

The necklaces and brooches of this contemporary jewelry designer present a beautiful mix of ancient and modern inspirations. *Beyazit*; 21/22 *Alibaba Türbesi Sokak Feyzullah Han*; (90) 212-519-51-75.

Koç Deri

With an outpost in the Grand Bazaar and one in Nisantasi, Koç has long been a favorite fur and leather source for Stamboulis. In summer the showroom features leather and suede; in winter furs take center stage, including knit vests and shearlings. *Grand Bazaar*; 22-46 *Kürkçüler*; (90) 212-527-55-53 and *Nisantasi*: *Tesvikiye Cad.*, 73 *Atiye Sok*; (90) 212-258-59-11.

Indagare Tip:

Credit cards are widely accepted and are always recommended when having items shipped, but cash may gain a lower price, particularly at shops in the Grand Bazaar (see page 47), and ATM machines are quite plentiful.





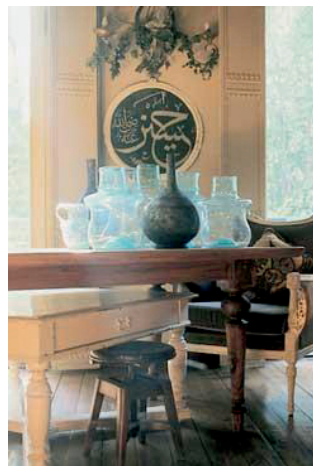
Clockwise from top right:
Armaggan; Turkish delight at
Hersey Asktan; the Grand Bazaar;
evil eye charms; the art gallery
at Armaggan.

destination report: where to shop

“For fashion finds, I like **Midnight Express**, which carries great one-off pieces by Turkish designers. For jewelry, **Kaf Kas** carries a very nice selection.
—Isabella Icoz, art consultant



Accessories and furniture on display at A La Turca showroom



Mehmet Cetinkaya Gallery

This is a good place to browse for vintage *suzanıs* in perfect condition (with prices to match). The owner also recently opened a new gallery called Columns next to this original branch. *Sultanahmet*; 7 *Küçük Ayasofya Cad.*, *Tavukhane Sok.*; (90) 212-517-68-08.

Orient Handmade Carpets

Don't let the somewhat generic name deter you; this boutique has an amazing collection of contemporary carpets in all textures and colors, as well as some vintage pieces. The staff here is expert and not pushy. *Çagaloglu*; 68 *Nuruosmaniye Cad.*; (90) 212-520 03-00.

NISANTASI

Armaggan

Located in the chic shopping district of Nisantasi, Armaggan (the name comes from the Turkish word for “gift”) boasts several floors of neo-Ottoman treasures. From textiles and naturally dyed linens to hand-tooled leather and stunning jewelry, the craftsmanship of each

piece is exquisite. The original branch of this unique concept store is in Nuruosmaniye (in the Old City), and also has a wonderful art gallery and Restaurant Nar on the premises. 8 *Abdi İpekeci Cad.*, *Bostan Sok.*; (90) 212-291-6292.

Asli Sargin

This tiny boutique in Nisantasi carries the designs of its owner along with other fashionable finds, such as the caftans of Antica di Sartoria Positano. There is a rich bohemian quality to the aesthetic. 33 *Maçka Cad.* *Tuncer Apt. K1-D7*; (90) 212-225-70-77.

Gönül Paksoy

The city's old-money socialites go crazy for Gönül Paksoy's exotic creations: one-of-a-kind tunics and robe-like dresses inspired by Sufi whirling dervishes. A chemist by training, Paksoy dyes the handwoven linens and silks in her self-made dyes, then pieces them together with antique fabrics she finds on her travels. She has two stores across the street from each other—one for clothes, one for accessories. *Tesvikiye*; 6A *Aytiye Sokak*; (90) 212-236-02-09.

Haremlique

Opened by Caroline Koç whose family has a long tradition in the Turkish textile business, and designer Banu Yentur, Haremlique offers gorgeous linens. The cotton sheets and terry towels can be custom-ordered and come in gorgeous colors. The shop also sells cashmere throws and fabrics, as well as great gift items like coffee sets and candles. *Akaretler; 11 Sair Nedim Bey Cad.; (90) 212-236-38-43.*

Midnight Express

This (somewhat unfortunately named) boutique is a favorite of fashion-forward shoppers looking for up-and-coming Turkish designers. Originally launched by a fashion designer and an architect, Midnight's collections focus on cool, contemporary ready-to-wear pieces. A second branch is located in Bebek. *Kadırgalar Cad. Açık Hava, Apt. No.8/3; (90) 212-231-26-28.*

Sevan Bicakci

Cult jeweler Sevan Bicakci is known for his outrageously ornate rings, all of which are distinctive and marked by intricate craftsmanship. His pieces are carried at shops like Barneys New York, but in Istanbul you can visit him at his atelier or see his work in his boutiques, including one in the W hotel in Akaretler. *Akaretler; 1A Sair Nedim Cad.; (90) 212-236-91-99*

Yastik by Rifat Ozbek

At this gorgeous shop, which resembles an art gallery, designer Rifat Ozbek teamed up with Erdal Karaman to offer beautiful cushions based on his own textile collection. There are the ikat-style ones, which are familiar sights from the pages of design magazines, as well as others made with vintage fabrics and floral prints. *Tesvikiye; Sakayık Sokak, Olcay Apt. 13/1; (90) 212-240-87-31.* ►►

Spotlight: Grand Bazaar

First-time travelers will get lost—but also have a lot of fun—in the cavernous tunnels of the Grand Bazaar, a 400-year-old indoor shopping complex, where you can satisfy all of your indigenous souvenir desires. The Bazaar houses over 4,000 shops that sell everything from carpets to crockery to leather goods. If you're going with a group of friends and split up, be sure to agree on an easy-to-find meeting point. Foodies will also want to stop by the nearby Spice Bazaar (see page 44). Here fashion and jewelry designer Denise Spencer who splits her time between Istanbul and New York shares advice on how to shop the Grand Bazaar without losing your mind:

- Stay cool and don't let the aggressive nature of some of the merchants and the frenetic energy stress you out and detract from the experience.
- Don't be afraid to wander off the main roads and into all of the nooks and crannies. You never know what you'll find around the next corner or down a narrow alley. If you get a little lost, it's ok. It's a big place but if you ask, people will point you back to the main roads and gates.
- Go with your gut. If you see something you like, don't be hesitant to go into the shop or to talk to the merchant. If you feel good about the price he gives and the item is worth it to you, then get it. There are more good and fair merchants in the bazaar than one might think, otherwise, they would never stay in business.





The view from Amanruya

Bodrum Cheat Sheet

It has been called the next St.-Tropez thanks to its glitzy beach scene, but the seaside peninsula also has incredible historic sites, including legendary Ephesus.

Bodrum was known in ancient times as Halicarnassus and its modern-day streets are still spotted with ruins, like the Mausoleum, an amphitheater from the Hellenistic age and the 15th-century Castle of St. Peter, which commands the harbor. Bodrum's past isn't, of course, what draws fashionable Turks and travelers from abroad. *The New York Times* dubbed the area "the next St.-Tropez" in 2006 thanks to an influx of luxury hotels, stylish shops and beach clubs.

Lay of the Land

Bodrum town is situated on the southern shore of the Bodrum Peninsula. While this historic port serves as the area's dining and nightlife hub, some of the most luxurious hotels are in its smaller towns, up to an hour's drive from Bodrum proper. When booking your accommodations, consider where you'd like to be based.

Where to Stay: Amanruya

Opened in late 2011 in a beautifully removed location (it is a thirty minutes' drive from the airport), this seaside property has thirty-six spacious cottages that act as stand-alone villas. Interiors are understated with lots of light wood, white linens and local rugs and kilims. Each villa comes with a private swimming pool and lush outdoor spaces. Amanruya guests can also use the nearby beach club. A spa, tennis court, boutique and art gallery are also on the premises. *Bülent Ecevit Cad., Demir Mevkii; (90) 252-311-1212; amanresorts.com.*

Best for Lunch/Lounging: Macakizi

One hears mixed things about staying at this hipper-than-thou boutique hotel, but everyone agrees that it is a glorious spot for long lunches that spill into cocktails and beyond. The excellent Turkish cuisine is served al fresco,

of course, and the Beach Bar is the single most popular spot in Bodrum during the high season. *Kesire Mevkii Narçiçeği Sk. Göltürkbükü; (90) 252-377-6272; www.macakizi.com.*

Best for Dinner: Kuum 29

The beachside restaurant of this boutique hotel in Göltürkbükü serves wonderfully fresh seafood. *Atatürk Cad. No. 150; (90) 252-311-00-60.*

On the Water: Turkish Gulet

Many dream of cruising on the Aegean; few know what this actually entails. A Turkish gulet is a classic wooden boat that ranks high in beauty and atmosphere but should not be confused with a sleek motor yacht. A gulet can access pristine fishing villages and gorgeous coves, but can also bring with it issues with spotty air conditioning and noisy generators. A multi-day itinerary often kicks off in southern Göcek and travels up the coast to end in Bodrum, traversing stunning scenery along the way. Travelers who prefer not to “rough it” overnight on board can also charter a gulet for the day while staying in Bodrum. *Contact Indagare’s Bookings Team for insight into gulet charters: 212-988-2611.*

Day Trips: Ancient Turkey

The ancient sites **Ephesus, Priene, Miletus** and **Didyma** are all within a two-hour drive from Bodrum and make for an intellectual day trip during a beach holiday. **Ephesus** was one of the largest cities in ancient Greece and is one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. Containing ruins the 6th-century BC Temple of Artemis and Library of Celsus, as well as the (homes of the patricians), Ephesus requires at least three hours to fully explore. The “PMD Tour,” consisting of a circuit of **Priene, Miletus** and **Didyma** surveys three more highly important sites: The marble city of Priene is considered the best existing example of an ancient Greek city, and is so well preserved that the drainage system and building foundations are still visible. Miletus was known as an intellectual hub, birthing famed philosophers as well as being the first city to adopt a grid-like pattern. Didyma once was an ancient temple and home to a high priestess and oracle.

Indagare’s Bookings Team can help members plan detailed Turkey itineraries, including Bodrum, ranging from simple day trips to multiday additional touring. Contact our team at 212-988-2611 or bookings@indagare.com.



From left: Ephesus; lunch at Macakizi

destination report: where to shop

“For a few day’s trip from Istanbul, I love **Bursa**. It was the first Ottoman capital and is a beautiful escape. Don’t miss the Ottoman family tombs, the Green Mosque, the Grand Mosque and the thermal springs there. -Asli Tunca, boutique owner



Beyoglu

A la Turca

Imagine the home of an incredibly stylish Turkish woman who has collected treasures, particularly carpets and textiles. That is the feeling of foraging in Erka Jaksoy’s A la Turca showroom, a great place to hunt for home accessories. *Cukurcuma; 4 Faikpasa; (90) 212-245-29-33.*

Asli Tunca

After a successful career as a fashion designer, Istanbul native Asli Tunca turned her focus to interior design. She and her Belgian artist husband, Carl Vercauteren, curate this collection of beautiful objects, both contemporary and antique, including paintings, sculptures and accessories such as pillows and jewelry. *Galatasaray; 34/20 Nuru Ziya Sok.; (90) 212-251-70-57.*

Janset Bilgin

This hip designer has been written up by *The New York Times* and was one of the first to champion the Galata neighborhood as one of Istanbul’s new artist enclaves. *Galata; 26 Serdar-I Ekrem Sok.; (90) 212-252-71-73.*

Sofa Art & Antiques

This shop’s owner has a keen eye for antiques and decorative arts. The tiny size of the shop makes the treasure hunting even more fun. The original branch is in Nuruosmaniye. *Galata; 47 Serdar-I Ekrem Sok.; (90) 212-292-39-77.*

Suzanne Simon

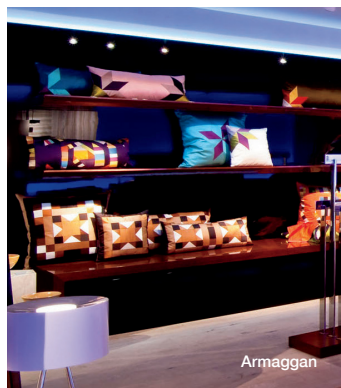
Fashion designer Suzanne Simon, an expat New Yorker, makes beautiful dresses, blouses, and caftans inspired by old fabric motifs. Open by appointment. *Cukurcuma; 1 Falk Pasa Yokusu; (90) 212-244-9663.*

Bebek

Hersey Asktan

This tiny boutique across the street from the Pera Palace hotel sells beautifully packaged gift boxes of Turkish delight (*lokum*). You can sample a half dozen varieties, then pick from the colorful boxes decorated with evil eye charms. *Küçük Bebek Cad.; (90) 212-263-89-69.*

For more shopping reviews go to [Istanbul Where to Shop](#). To speak with a travel specialist about planning an itinerary or hiring a personal shopper in Istanbul, contact Indagare’s Bookings Team: 212-988-2611.



Armaggan

Spotlight: Top Shops Not to Miss

In the Grand Bazaar: **Abdullah** for gifts; **Adnan & Hasan** for carpets; **Epoque** for vintage jewelry; **Koç** for leather, fur and suede. In Nisantasi: **Armaggan**, for a Turkish version of Takashimaya; **B Point** for great jewelry at reasonable prices; **Gonul Paksoy** for fashions with an Ottoman sensibility; **Koç** for leather and fur; **Midnight Express** for a selection of modern Turkish designers. Further field: **A la Turca** and **Asli Tunca** for a sense of how Istanbul’s elite lives; **Haremlique** for gorgeous linens and towels; **Sevan Bicakci** for really special jewelry; **Sofa Art and Antiques** for a curated, best-of-the-bazaar experience.



Istanbul's Topkapi Palace

Indagare Insider Access

Our travel experts can help craft your journeys, from a simple hotel reservation to a multistop Turkey itinerary. For Indagare members there is no booking fee.

Turkey is a favorite destination of Indagare's well-traveled community. Founder Melissa Biggs Bradley has hosted **Insider Trips** to Istanbul, with a few days spent exploring the incredible landscapes of Cappadocia. Several Turkey-inspired artists and designers, some sourced on the staff's scouting trips, are also part of the **Indagare Souk** (read an interview with Haremliques' Caroline Koç on page 52). Whether it's multi-generational families traveling together or a couple on a romantic getaway, Turkey itineraries can be customized for a number of sensibilities and requirements. An ideal first-time itinerary includes insightful tours of such monuments as the Hippodrome, Blue Mosque and Topkapi Palace, as well as a private cruise down the Bosphorus, a tour of Istanbul's modern art scene and—of course—insider shopping experiences (the Grand Bazaar alone is easily a half-day activity).

Partly owing to Indagare's own obsession with Istanbul, the **Bookings Team** has built a network of trusted on-the-ground specialists, including guides, art consultants and personal shoppers. One member wrote after a trip: "We loved our Indagare recommended tour guide. A short version of the actor Jeff Goldblum, he was not only knowledgeable and passionate about his city, but he knew when to dish the dirt, i.e. when my daughters and I needed a break from the history lesson that is Istanbul."

The Bookings Team can also offer advice when it comes to venturing beyond Istanbul, whether to the canyon-like landscapes of Cappadocia, the seaside resorts of Izmir and Bodrum, and the Aegean coast.

Read more about Turkey on Indagare. For help making your next Turkey itinerary special, call 212-988-2611 or email bookings@indagare.com.

Q&A with Caroline Koç

The stylish founder of Haremlique, an Istanbul-based lifestyle brand that produces gorgeous textiles and linens, shares her insider Turkey picks.



What inspired you to start Haremlique and what makes the products so unique?

I always had a wish to create a Turkish brand. My family textile background played a great role in the theme of Haremlique. I grew up surrounded by textiles, and they are something I love. For the creation of Haremlique designs my partner, Banu, and I get inspired from the elegant themes used in Ottoman designs, and from the architecture of Istanbul, the city in which we both live.

What is your definition of Turkish style?

Turkish style reflects the character of the people, combining the classic and the contemporary. There is an attraction to the new and original, while also nurturing the traditional and creative individuality, which derives from the cultural diversity of the region.

What should a first-time Istanbul visitor see?

Definitely the Topkapi Palace, especially the harem and its jewelry departments, and the Dolmabahce Palace.

What are some of your favorite Istanbul “secrets”?

For a restaurant, I like Iskele, in Rumelihisarz, for seafood and a beautiful view. Pierre Loti in Eyüp is a lovely cafe and Yıldız Park a green

enclave. Chalabi, in the Grand Bazaar, is a great address for antique silver, and my favorite museum is Sadberk Hanım, in Sarıyer.

What are some of your favorite shops?

Armagan in Nuruosmaniye and the design shops in Cukurcuma. I also like to browse the Grand Bazaar and the Arasta Bazaar (close to the Four Seasons Hotel in Sultanahmet). For carpets and textiles, I head to the terrific Mehmet Cetinkaya Gallery.

What are the must-know addresses in Bodrum and in Cappadocia?

Bodrum: For daytime relaxation, nothing beats the Amanruya in Torba. For happy hour, I head to Macakızı, and my tip for a big night out is dinner at Kuum 29. In Cappadocia, a beautiful place to stay is the Museum Hotel.

Haremlique Istanbul: Akaretler; 11 Sair Nedim Bey Cad.;

(90) 212-236-38-43. *The Indagare Souk carries a variety of Haremlique products. Visit the Indagare Souk to browse the inspired collection.*

Read interviews with many more Istanbul insiders, at www.indagare.com. For help with your next trip, contact our Bookings Team: 212-988-2611.





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“If one had but a single glance to give the world, one should gaze on Constantinople.” - *Alphonse de Lamartine*

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