



Turkey

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HISTORY



Istanbul, Turkey, was founded about 660 BC as Byzantium. The city has changed names numerous times and was initially known as Byzantium. It was the capital city of the Eastern Roman, Byzantine, and Ottoman empires and was led by rulers such as Alexander the Great, Septimius Severus, and Constantine the Great. The city became known as Istanbul after falling to Ottoman rule in the 15th century. It once carried the title of the world's most crowded city. Today, it has a population of more than 15-million. Interesting fact: part of the city lies in Europe, and the other part is in Asia..

MONEY

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Lira is the official currency in Turkey, and you'll get more bang for your buck if you use it. The euro currency is also accepted there.

Credit Cards

Visa and MasterCard are widely accepted, while you'll only be able to use your American Express in high-end hotels, restaurants, and souvenir shops.

ATMs

ATMs are populous in the city. Smaller restaurants and businesses prefer patrons to use cash.



HELPFUL INFO

Climate

The summers are dry and humid, while the winter months are cold and wet. The mild temperatures of fall and spring make those seasons the best time to visit..

Electricity

In Turkey uses round-prong plugs that output 220-volts of power.



Technology & Communication

The number of Turkish citizens who use the Internet has increased from 3% in 2000 to 44% now. Also, 96% of citizens own a cell phone, according to the Turkish Heritage Organization.

Infrastructure & Transport

Most people in Istanbul travel by personal vehicle, bus, minibus, or taxi. The city also operates several railway transport systems. Boat transportation is also popular, given that the city is in two continents, Europe and Asia. People use the Istanbul Kart, a smart card, to travel via public transportation in the city.

In Case Of An Emergency

Turkish emergency numbers are 155 (Police), 110 (Fire), and 112 (Ambulance). U.S. citizens can call the embassy or consulate for emergencies.

Language

Turkish is the official language, but many people in Istanbul also speak English.



LGBT Travel

Turkey remains pretty restrictive on gay rights. But Istanbul, which holds an annual Pride Week, is known as a welcoming city to LGBT people.

Religion

Islam is the predominant religion in Turkey. It's OK to dress informally in Istanbul, but when visiting mosques, female tourists should cover their hair with scarves and wear long tops that are long-sleeved.

And males and females should wear pants that come to their knees.



Getting There

Turkish and other world airlines offer daily flights to the city, and local airlines provide charter flights to Istanbul. Bus trips offered by private Turkish bus companies to Istanbul are also available to tourists traveling from countries such as Germany, Austria, and Switzerland.

Driving

The Turkish drive on the right side of the road. The country's large cities offer chauffeur-driven and self-drive cars for hire. Taxis are also plentiful.

THE EXPERIENCE

Culture

Istanbul is both modern and traditional and home to many civilization and people. Islam is the predominant religion in Turkey, so Islamic customs should be respected. You should greet visitors by shaking hands.

Bucket List

Rode a Ferry across the Bosphorous Bridge

Visit the Blue Mosque

Visit Hagia Sophia Museum

Visit Basilica Cistern

Take a Walk Through the Jewish
Quarter

Family Travel Highlights

Tram Ride

Istanbul Modern Museum

Topkapi Place

Miniaturk

Istanbul Akvaryum

Tourism Authority

Istanbul Convention & Visitors Bureau

Phone: (+90 212) 522 55 55

Web: www.icvb.org

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Foods To Try

Kumpir (baked potato)

Pide (similar to pizza, its a thin pastry topped with cheese, egg, chicken or tuna and baked on high heat)

Kofte (Turkish meatballs).

Drinks To Try

Raki

Cay

Boza



Photography Hot Spots

Istanbul Ferry

Hagia Sophia

Blue Mosque

Grand Bazaar

Galata Bridge

Souvenirs To Buy

Turkish teas

Turkish spices

Carpet

Blue Evil Eye of Turkey

Mosaic Lamps

