
OTTOMAN & BYZANTINE RELICS FULL DAY CITY TOUR PROGRAMME

Our tour starts with a visit to **the Rumeli Fortress**. This citadel was built by Mehmet the Conqueror across from **the Anatolia Fortress** (Anadolu Hisari) in preparation for what was to be the seventh and final Ottoman siege of the fortified Byzantine city. Constructed in only 4 months, the fortress served to cut off Black Sea traffic in and out of the city, together with **the Anadolu Hisari** built by his great-grandfather across **the Bosphorus** on the Asian shores.

The Ottoman army eventually penetrated the city by carrying the Turkish galleons over land by way of a sled and pulley system, and dropping them into the **Golden Horn** and behind the city's defenses. It is located within borders of Sarıyer district and gave its name to the location, covering 30.000 m² area. According to two inscriptions in Büyük Zağanos Tower and Küçük Zağanos Pasha Tower, the castle was built in about four month period which is a considerably short period. The art book called "Serh-i Tecriid-i Ataik" in süleymaniye Library, it is said that the building had been completed in 139 days. The timbers used in building were from Izmit and Black sea Ereğli; the stones were from various plces of Anatolia and spolis are from destroyed Byzantine buildings located around. In some histories it has been stated that 1000 masters, 2000 workers and many transporters were employed in building but Architect E.H. Ayverdi states that approximately 300 masters, 700-800 workers and 200 transporters, boats, vehicles etc were employed. Mortary volume of the building covering 60.000 m² area is about 57.700 m³. Mountain Gate, Dizdar Gate, Hisarpençe Gate and Sel Gate are four main gates and it also has a secondary gate called Mezarlık Gate. It has Saruca Pasha, Halil Pasha and Zağanos Pasha, three old and junior Zağanas Pasha, one small and totally four towers; 13 castles in various sizes. It has two water ducts, one is blocked, three fountains two of which are lost. Only one destroyed minarette from the mosque remained until present time. The building was considerably damaged from 1509 earthquake but repaired promptly. It is known that it was also repaired during Selim III(1789- 1807). But essential repair was made by architect Mrs Cahide Tamer, Mrs. Selma Emler and Mrs. Mualla Arhegger-Eyüboğlu upon directive of President Mr. Celal Bayar in 1953. Open exhibition is made in the museum, but there is no exhibition hall and store house. **Artilleries, shot and the chains** which was claimed be used in blocking of **Haliç** (Golden Horn) are exhibited in the garden.

For a clean weather, and a walk among the trees, **Yıldız Park** is the best choice. In this park you can find, besides the beauty of nature, **the Yıldız Porcelain Factory** (closed on Saturday-Sunday) and **Yıldız Palace**. **Yıldız Porcelain Factory** was established under the patronage of Sultan Abdülhamid II in the grounds of **Yıldız Palace** in 1894. The intention was to rescue traditional Turkish porcelain from decline due to competition from the porcelain industries of Europe. Known as **the Yıldız Fabrika-i Hümâyûn**, its outstanding early products were commissioned for the royal palaces and **kösks**. This factory made a key contribution to the synthesis between European and Turkish art. Production here has continued uninterrupted, and its high quality products have helped to preserve the art of Turkish porcelain and acquaint people all over the world with its traditional designs. Today **the Yıldız Porcelain Factory** is a museum-factory which produces both items in modern designs and reproductions of its exquisite early ware, so that the public can enjoy the art of a bygone age in their homes as well as in museums.

This Ottoman heritage continues with a visit to **the Yıldız Palace**. **The Yıldız Palace** is a vast complex of mansions and pavillions extending from Yildiz Hill to the district of Besiktas and from there on to Ortakoy. During the reign of Abdulhamid II, the complex was covering an area of over 500.000 square meters including pavillions such as the Queen Mother's

Mansion, the Pavillion Mansion, the Island Mansion, the Lesser Ceremonial Mansion and the Princes Mansion. **The Yıldız Palace** complex displays a variety of styles, forms and techniques since its prominent architects include Sarkis Balyan, Agop Balyan and Raimondo d'Aronco. The Palace contains several artifacts from **the Yıldız Porcelain** factory that consists of cups, vases, dishes, bowls, bottles, basins, pen-holders and many more wonders still on display at the Palace.

Now it is time to stop and have a lunch!

Lunch will be served at Malta Pavilion that situated in Yıldız Park (http://www.beltur.com.tr/pages/malta_kosku.html)

Our tour which is both cultural and enjoyable, in this beautiful scenery, is ended. We lead our way from Besiktas to Harbiye, which takes nearly 20 minutes, to visit another important place, **the Military Museum**. Since war plays a pivotal role in the history and culture of Turkey, no visit to Turkey would be complete without a stopover at the Military Museum. The **Military Museum** (*Askeri Müzesi*) at **Harbiye**, 1 km (just over a half mile) north of Taksim Square, chronicles mostly the Ottoman period when the Sultan's troops threatened to conquer eastern Europe, the entire Middle East, and North Africa. It is one of the leading museums of its kind in the world. The Turkish nation has a long and distinguished military tradition dating from the time when they were palace guards for the great Arab caliphs.

Don't ignore this museum just because you're no military buff. It holds striking historical treasures such as **the chain** which the Byzantines stretched across the mouth of the **Golden Horn** to keep out the Sultan's navy in 1453. The Sultan's sumptuous *sayeban* or "pavilion," encrusted with a fortune in jewels, is an open-sided "tent" in which he sat to receive foreign emissaries. The exhibit is anything but dull, showcasing chain mail and bronze armor for both cavalry and horses, leather and metalwork costumes, hand-sewn leather and arrow bags, swords engraved with fruit and flower motifs or Islamic inscriptions, and even a petroleum-driven rifle. Not to be missed is the hall of tents, an unanticipated display of *in situ* elaborately embroidered and silk encampment tents used on war expeditions.

The **Military Museum** is also where you can hear the **Mehter**, the world's oldest military band, play each afternoon (the 20- minute concerts begin at 3 and at 4 pm). This startlingly powerful musical performance recreates the traditional military band of the Janissaries, the elite Ottoman corps abolished when their power became too great. The musical arrangement is an unexpectedly organized cacophony of sounds that, preceding the approaching army, also served to instill terror in the opposing army. The **Ottomans** were the first to bring musicians on campaign and to integrate music into the life and work of the army. After a town had been conquered, **the Mehter** preceded the conquering Ottoman commander on a procession through the town, playing slow-cadence marches in exotic minor modes. **Mehter** is the symbol of **Ottoman** military power. The boom of **kettledrums** (invented by the Mehter), the wail of **oboes** and clash of **cymbals** (another Turkish invention) was meant to glorify the conquest and impress upon the populace that they were now part of an entirely different civilization. Our tour ends here. We hope you enjoyed it!

Tours run everyday *except* Monday (**Yıldız Palace and the Military Museum** are closed), Tuesday (**the Military Museum** is closed) and Wednesday (**Rumeli Fortress** is closed.)

Program inclusions

- Full day Transportation by A/C coach
- Guiding services in English

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- Sites and Museum Entrances mentioned in the program
 - Parking fees, tips to the restaurants
 - Meal as per given plan (4 course set meal and limited soft drinks option)
 - VAT of %18

Net Non Commissionable
Valid for min 25 full paying pax

Price per person 100,00 USD