

Planning a Football Trip to Istanbul

Planning a Football Trip to Istanbul? Free guide – where to stay, eat, drink and how to get tickets; to the stadium.

Football Trip to Istanbul – How to get to Istanbul & How to get around

Football Trip to Istanbul – Fly to Istanbul

The main tourist season runs from April to the end of October, with the busiest period July and August. Flights to Istanbul are most expensive during these peak months so it's best to search for flights as early as you can to try and save some money.

The winter tends to be very wet and cold so tourism is at a low, that being said you'll find cheap flights to Istanbul and get good hotel deals too. September to October has mild weather and less tourists than the peak summer months. Flights to Istanbul are generally cheaper too.

To find the cheapest flights to Istanbul, try to book as early as 8 weeks before you wish to travel. Sometimes you might grab a deal on flight tickets 2 weeks before departure, although generally 6-8 weeks is the sweet spot. After this the prices will rise more the closer it gets to the day of travel.

How long is the flight to Istanbul?

Flights from London (All airports) to Istanbul – 3 hours 45 minutes

Flights from Manchester to Istanbul – 4 hours 0 minutes

Flights from Birmingham to Istanbul – 3 hours 55 minutes

Flights from Glasgow to Istanbul – 5 hours 50 minutes

Which airlines operate flights to Istanbul?

Depending on where you're flying out from, the airline will vary. The main ones that operate the route are KLM, Air France, British Airways and Turkish Airlines. One option is choosing KLM for one direction and Air France for the return flight, giving you the cheapest flights to Istanbul due to the competitive prices.

Start your holiday in style and enjoy the experience of VIP travel – book an airport lounge with [Lounge Pass](#) from as little as £13.50. With 200 airport VIP lounges worldwide, including 35 UK airports you can add an extra touch of luxury to your next trip and make the travel experience a whole lot better.

Directions from the Airport

Istanbul Atatürk Airport was replaced in regards to commercial passenger functions by the newly constructed Istanbul Airport, in April 2019, in order to meet Istanbul's growing domestic and international air traffic demand as a source, destination and transit point.

The airport is located next to the Black Sea on the European side, about 40 km away from Taksim and 49 km from Sultanahmet.

Havaist is a new airport shuttle service operating several bus lines between the new Istanbul airport and spots all over Istanbul.

To reach Taksim, it's really straightforward. You take the line IST 19: New Istanbul Airport – Beşiktaş – Taksim (which also stops at Zincirlikuyu and 4. Levent Metro) and you get off at the last stop, in front of the Point Hotel, close to

Taksim square. From there you can either walk to your hotel, take a taxi or the metro.

To reach Sultanahmet, Beşiktaş, or Yenikapı, just take the line that has the respective districts as its (final) destination.

The fare for the bus lines is 18 TL per person, one way, luggage included. Trips take on average 100 minutes, more during rush hour. Luckily the buses have TV-movie-series services, WiFi, and USB charging units to make the trip a bit more enjoyable. You can find the timetables on the official Havaist website.

Private Shuttle

A private shuttle is a great alternative for both the taxi and the standard airport shuttle. They are more comfortable than taxis, have a fixed rate, hence offer a much more relaxed (and safe) drive to your hotel. Unlike the Havaist airport shuttle, private shuttles bring you to the hotel's doorstep. They are also the best option when you travel with very young children. In case of the latter, ask for a child seat

In the future, there will be a metro line. However, the M11 is still being constructed and planned to start operating at the end of 2019. It will start from Gayrettepe and integrate with the metrobus line, M2 Yenikapı-Hacıosman metro line (currently active) and M7 Kabataş-Mahmutbey line (still being constructed-first section, Mecidiyeköy-Mahmutbey, is projected to launch in the last quarter of 2019.)

Taxis from the Airport

A lot of tourists instinctively take a taxi to reach their hotel. But with the New Istanbul Airport being minimum 40 km away, you may want to give that some extra thought. A trip from the new Istanbul airport to Taksim will set you back for minimum 105 TL, and 135 to Sultanahmet. However, these are NOT

fixed prices; if the taxi hits traffic, uses toll roads or takes a longer (but according to the taxi driver) quicker road, the fare may increase quickly. Even if you're a party of four and the driver manages to fit all your luggage in the trunk, you're still better off taking one of the options below.

In case you must take a taxi, just walk to the official taxi ranks located just outside the terminal. Never take a ride from the hustlers inside the airport terminal, and always ask to switch on the meter.

Football Trip to Istanbul – Travel By Train

To travel by train from London in the United Kingdom to Istanbul in Turkey, the main route leads via France, Germany, Hungary and Romania. Or via France, Switzerland, Hungary, Serbia and Bulgaria.

There are two main routes. Compare them and decide which one feeds your needs best.

1 – London (United Kingdom) – Paris (France) – Munich (Germany) – Budapest (Hungary) – Bucharest (Romania) – Istanbul (Turkey)

2 – London (United Kingdom) – Paris (France) – Zurich (Switzerland) – Budapest (Hungary) – Belgrade (Serbia) – Sofia (Bulgaria) – Istanbul (Turkey)

Football Trip to Istanbul – Travel Around Istanbul

Ferry

The vapur (ferry) is the best way to get from the European to the Asian side (or vice versa) when the bridge is absolutely

full of cars. Rush hour starts at around 8AM and ends 6PM on weekdays, so lots of people commuting to and from work prefer to glide over the Bosphorus instead. There are three main ferry stations on the European side: Beşiktaş, Kabataş (currently under construction) and Karaköy. There is also Eminönü, from where ferries go directly to the Kadıköy Ferry Station on the Asian side.

Metro

The Istanbulkart can be purchased upon your arrival at the airport or from machines in major transit stations like Eminönü. It will cost you around TL 10 and you can have one per family or group of up to five persons, although it is recommended to get one for three people so that you can benefit from the discount on each fare (you will get 50% off on the next five trips if they don't exceed two hours). Then load the card with money, estimating around TL 3 per trip, per mode of transport and per person. At each stop you will find a machine and a turnstile where you can present the card. If you are staying in Sultanahmet or Taksim, use the T1 which crosses the Golden Horn over the Bosphorus. You can easily find a tram map at any stop and you get a full map when you buy the pass. You can either hop off at Karaköy and walk up to Istiklal Caddesi or take the modern funicular (F1) which will take you to Taksim Place in no more than 150 seconds from the Kabataş stop!

Taxi

Each kilometre costs around TL 3 and in case the car stops an extra TL 0.50 per minute. To save you time calculating, from Sultanahmet to Galata Tower or Dolmabahçe Palace you will pay around TL 20; to Kadıköy on the Asian side, it should be around TL 60. From Taksim to Sultanahmet, around TL 20 and again to Kadıköy TL 50. If you intend to take a taxi at the airport, the same recommendations outlined above apply and the cost should be between TL 60 and 70 from Atatürk Airport. You

can get a better price (around 50% less) if you book your airport transfers in advance on the internet. Choose one who asks for your flight number and reacts quickly to your request. Once at the airport, be careful as a swarm of attendants will buzz around you asking for your name. These guys work for several web-based companies at the same time. It is important to reconfirm the agreed price and your name. You don't usually tip a taxi driver but you can round up. Also, if your host offered a transfer service it might be the best way.

Football Trip to Istanbul – How to Get to the Match

The Big Three (Turkish: Üç büyükler) is the nickname of the three most successful sports clubs in Turkey, all three based in Istanbul, Turkey's largest city. The football teams of Beşiktaş, Fenerbahçe and Galatasaray have a great rivalry, and are usually the main contenders for the title. Combined they share a total of 55 out of 62 Turkish Super League Championships. None of them have been relegated from the Süper Lig either, having been participants in all editions since 1959 season; the lowest position any of them has earned is 10th, Fenerbahçe, while Beşiktaş and Galatasaray's lowest positions have been 11th.

In addition there are two other Istanbul teams in the Superliga.

İstanbul Başakşehir FK play their home games at the Başakşehir Fatih Terim Stadium which is owned by the Municipality of İstanbul. They finished the 2014-2015 Super League season 4th place.

Kasımpaşa is home to one of the five İstanbul-based teams that play in the Super League. The club was originally founded as Altıntuğ Club in 1921, when two sport clubs of this suburb—Altıntuğ and Kasımpaşa Terbiye – united their forces

for a better future. However, the club's name changed to Kasımpaşa SK in 1942, while the dark blue and white colors of team remained. Except the season 1945-1946, they played in the İstanbul League from 1939 to 1959. After playing five seasons in the Super League, they relegated to Second League, where they remained for very long time.

Football Trip to Istanbul – The Stadiums and Getting to the Stadium

Besiktas

The stadium was built on the site of Beşiktaş's former home, BJK İnönü Stadium. It has a capacity of approximately 41,188 spectators, after initially being planned for 41,903. On August 14, 2019, the stadium hosted the 2019 UEFA Super Cup.

The following transit lines have routes that pass near The İnönü Stadium – Bus: 129T, 559C, DT2; Metro: M2; Cable Car: BOSTANCI – TAKSIM, KADIKÖY – TAKSIM.

Fernabace

The Ülker Stadium (Turkish pronunciation: [ˈɯlcɯɾ saraˈdʒoːɫu]), previously known as Şükrü Saracoğlu stadium in the Kadıköy district of Istanbul, Turkey. It is the traditional home venue of major Turkish multi-sport club Fenerbahçe SK. The stadium was inaugurated in 1908 and renovated between 1929 and 1932, 1965 and 1982, and 1999 and 2006. On October 4, 2006, after numerous inspections by UEFA, Ülker Stadium was selected to host the 2009 UEFA Cup Final that went down to history as the last Final of the UEFA Cup. Sukru Saracoglu is located on the Asian side of the city of Istanbul, quite close to the bank of the Bosphorus in the historic district Kadikoy.

The stadium is situated at a short 15-minute walk from the Kadikoy pier, where the ferries from the western side of the

city (e.g. Eminonu or Besiktas) embark.

The stadium also lies at walking distance from Haydarpaşa train station, where most trains from Turkey's inland arrive.

Galatasaray

Türk Telekom Stadyumu) is a football stadium serving as the home ground of the Süper Lig club Galatasaray S.K.. It is located in the Seyrantepe quarter of the Sarıyer district, on the European side of Istanbul, Turkey. The all-seater stadium has the capacity to host 52,223 spectators during football games. The stadium is part of the Ali Sami Yen Sports Complex.

Türk Telekom Stadium was the first stadium in Turkey that met the UEFA Euro 2016 requirements during the country's bid to host the European Championship

The arena is best reached by metro. Stop Seyrantepe, which branches off metro line 2, is a short walk away from the stadium. You can catch line 2 at station Sishane or Taksim at the northern edge of the city centre.

İstanbul Başakşehir

The 3. İstanbul Başakşehir Fatih Terim Stadyumu (Turkish: Başakşehir Fatih Terim Stadyumu) is a football stadium in Başakşehir district of İstanbul, Turkey named in honour of successful Turkish footballer and manager Fatih Terim. Opened officially to public on 26 July 2014, the venue has a capacity of 17,156 spectators

The following transit lines have routes that pass near Başakşehir Fatih Terim Stadyumu – Bus: Bus – 78G, Bus – 78H, Bus – 78M, Bus – 79B, Bus – MK21; Metro: Metro – M3.

Kasımpaşa S.K.

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan Stadium (also known as Kasımpaşa Stadium) is a multi-use stadium in the Kasımpaşa neighbourhood of Istanbul, Turkey. It is currently used mostly for football

matches, and is the home stadium of Kasımpaşa S.K. The stadium capacity was extended to 14,234 spectators. Due to extension works, Kasımpaşa played most of its home matches in the Atatürk Olympic Stadium in the 2007–2008 season. It is named after the incumbent Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, a native of Kasımpaşa and a football player in his youth.

Recep Tayyip Erdogan Stadium is located in the Beyoglu area in central Istanbul, just north of the Galata tower and only a few blocks downhill off the main Istligal pedestrian street.

Taksim Square furthermore lies an approximate 15-minute walk away, while the walk from the Sultanahmet area takes about half an hour.

Football Trip to Istanbul – Getting Tickets

For all matches in Turkey, you need to possess a Passolig card to be able to buy tickets and enter the stadium. In the case of foreigners this is a pre-paid card. You can apply for a card on the Passolig website.

Once you have a pass tickets for all teams can be bought through Passo.com.tr.



Football Trip to Istanbul – Fixtures

When planning your football trip please note that the dates shown represent the weekend that the game is scheduled to take place and games are likely to change through the season and be moved for TV scheduling.

Plan your Football Trip to Istanbul with the full list of fixtures on the [Turkish Superliga Website](#) .

The schedule for kick-off times in Turkey can be found our [Planning a Football Trip to Turkey](#) page (COMING SOON)

Football Trip to Istanbul – Where to stay. What to See. Where to Eat. Where to Drink

[Booking.com](#)

Football Trip to Istanbul – Where to stay

Beyoğlu is the European side of the river, on the Eastern side, and is known for being a trendy area full of cobbled roads, great cafe's, pubs, and shopping, as well as boutique hotels.

Inside Beyoğlu are the popular areas of Taksim Square a popular tourist area, Pera (Greek neighborhood), Galata (shopping area, Galata tower, also touristy), Karakoy (very cool, trendy, young), and Istiklal street (shopping street, very busy and touristy). Also in this area is Serdar-ı Ekrem, a very popular road for shopping. There are a lot of trendy boutiques. The Soho House is also in this district.

On the other part of the European side is Sultanahmet, which is the #1 area for tourism in Istanbul as it holds the Hagia Sofia, Blue Mosque, Topkapı Palace, and the movie-famous Basilica Cistern. You can stay here, but it's a little more expensive in this area for shopping and food. By a little, I mean instead of a 6 Lira (\$2) kebab, you could spend 16 Lira (\$5). It doesn't seem like much but you are basically going to

double your food and drink costs while here.

Football Trip to Istanbul – What else to see & do

Hagia Sophia is considered one of the most beautiful buildings in the world. It was once a church and a mosque but is now one of the most visited museums in the world.

There are more than 5,000 shops in the Grand Bazaar covering 60 streets. Spend a day losing yourself in the giant labyrinth that houses Mosques, hammams, cafes, and jewelry stalls.

The Galata Tower offers beautiful views of the city. It is located just North of the Golden Horn in the Galata Quarter.

The Sultan Ahmed Mosque is Istanbul's most famous site and is the top thing to do in Istanbul. It's known by its more common name, The Blue Mosque because of the blue tiles surrounding the walls of its interior. Located in the old city, it's the perfect way to start your day before moving on to the other sights nearby.

Taksim: known as the "Time Square" of Istanbul, this shopping area is always crowded with people. This is where you'll find the best shopping in the city, as well as several restaurants, bars and nightclubs.

Beyoglu: This up-and-coming neighborhood has a bohemian feel and boasts many small shops and cute restaurants. Be sure to wander past the Galata Tower, and if you want views of the city, head to the top for 25 TL (\$8.60 USD).

Kadiköy: We stayed in this neighborhood for its proximity to both Sultanahmet and Taksim. We were impressed by the amount of trendy restaurants and soon discovered why this is often referred to as the "hipster" neighborhood.

Sultanahmet: This is where many of the main tourist

attractions are, so as you may expect, it is very touristy. While it's definitely a place to visit in Istanbul, we got tired of the restaurants' inflated prices, the souvenir shops, carpet sellers and the lack of authenticity.

Ortaköy: Popular with locals and visitors alike, this neighborhood features a picturesque mosque on the Bosphorus and boasts some pretty cute restaurants and bars.

Football Trip to Istanbul – Where to Drink

The Populist is a long-standing resident of the Bomontiada complex (an old brewery-turned-entertainment centre). A popular craft brewery and eatery with a lively atmosphere, this three-storey bar includes a DJ station set in a bright orange Volkswagen van. The bar has a rotating selection of 12 beers on tap

Bosphorus Brewing Company (BBC) is one of Istanbul's few brewpubs. Created in 2012 by one Turkish partner and a British couple, BBC's beers are made from hops brought from Norfolk, England – meaning the brews here can be pricey. A quintessential English pub, BBC serves classic British food, including shepherd's pie, sausages and fish and chips. First-time visitors are offered tasters on a tray and get to pick their favourite beer.

Ay1 Pub, which translates to 'Bear Pub', originally gained popularity through its hip Moda location on Istanbul's Anatolian side. It boasts an impressive list of beer from various countries

Beer Hall, located in the trendy Akaretler district, is a popular spot among young residents. Featuring a quirky festival theme, the bar's interior decor includes mini fast-food trucks, popcorn carts, retro neon signs and long picnic tables. Alongside lots of classic options on tap and in

bottles.

Taps Bebek, a bar housed in a three-storey mansion on the seaside. This cheerful venue has upbeat music blaring through its speakers and soccer games on its TV all day. Taps Bebek was one of the first craft breweries in Istanbul .

Football Trip to Istanbul – Where to Eat

Şehzade Cağ Kebap (kebab) – Cağ Kebap is a type of kebab from Eastern Turkey that cooked on a horizontal spit (unlike the typical vertical spit). Address: Ankara Cad. HocaPaşa Sok. No:4, 34110 İstanbul, Turkey; Open hours: 10 am to 9:30 pm on Monday to Saturday (closed on Sunday).

Tarihi Karadeniz Döner (doner kebab) You can get a doner sandwich, or you can go bigger and get a plate of carved doner meat with bread on the side. Address: Sinanpaşa Mahallesi, Mumcu Bakkal Sokak, No 6, Beşiktaş, İstanbul; Open hours: 10:30 am to 6 pm daily.

Kofte Sandwich Stall (grilled) – Small kofte street food stall, just behind the Ritz-Carlton Hotel and Vodafone Arena. The friendly service paired with freshly grilled kofte minced meat patties, all stuffed into bread with spices.

Balkan Lokantasi (home-style food) – It's cafeteria style often with big lines, you can pretty much eat any kind of home-style Turkish food – from casseroles to stews. It's a fantastic restaurant in Istanbul to have a feast on a budget. Address: Cihannüma Mahallesi, Akmazçeşme Sokak, No 6, Beşiktaş, İstanbul; Open hours: 10 am to 9:45 pm daily.

Fish and Meat House (seafood) – Located in Beyoğlu, near İstiklal Street and Taksim Square, this small family run restaurant is another good place to eat grilled fish and salad. Address: Cihangir Mahallesi, Sıraselviler Caddesi, Soğancı Sokak, No 8/D, Beyoğlu, İstanbul; Open hours: 12 noon to 12 midnight daily.

Stuffed Mussels can be found in many places in the city but I think you can always find some in Taksim region. But I especially suggest the mobile one in front of Bahçeşehir University in Beşiktaş. It was really delicious. The price of 1 mussel is around ₺1 (around \$0.2) but it can change a bit according to its size

The most famous chain cafe for eating simit is “Simit Sarayı”. However, you will be seeing many sellers on the roads also. Just be sure they are fresh. The simit price is ₺1.5. (around \$0.3)

The best and most known place for Islak Hamburger is “Kızılıkayalar” in Taksim. Price of one is around ₺5. (around \$1)

“Unkapanı Pilavcısı” is very famous and sometimes there can be a long cue in front of this one. A portion of rice with chicken is ₺10. (around \$2)

Football trip to Istanbul – Useful links

<http://thatbackpacker.com/2013/12/09/50-things-to-do-in-istanbul-turkey/>

<https://theplanetd.com/12-things-to-do-in-Istanbul>

[Top 10 Things To Do and See in Istanbul](#)

<https://www.intrepidtravel.com/adventures/what-to-do-in-istanbul/>

<https://www.theguardian.com/travel/2011/sep/14/10-best-sights-istanbul-city-guide>

<https://theculturetrip.com/europe/turkey/articles/where-to-grab-a-beer-in-istanbul/>

<https://everybodyhatesatourist.net/the-best-craft-beer-in-ista>

[nbul-turkey/](#)

<https://www.ourescapeclause.com/best-food-in-istanbul/>

<https://migrationology.com/travel-guides/istanbul-turkey/>

[*Must-eat street food in Istanbul*](#)

[*Top 20 Things to Eat in Istanbul |Best Street Food*](#)

[*Istanbul's Street Food – What's Hot And What's Not!*](#)