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PLANNING TO TOUR? / ISTANBUL

10 Istanbul Museums to Explore

From archaeology and palace life to modern art, cinema and industrial history.

FREE CITY GUIDE

MUSEUMS

Curated July 2026 | English | 3 pages

10 Istanbul Museums to Explore

Istanbul's museums span several districts and many centuries. Build your plan by neighbourhood and check official ticketing, closure days and timed-entry requirements before setting out.

1

Istanbul Archaeological Museums / Sultanahmet

Three major collections beside Topkapi Palace covering archaeology, the Ancient Orient and Islamic ceramics.

2

Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts / Sultanahmet

Carpets, manuscripts, woodwork and ethnographic displays in the historic Ibrahim Pasha Palace.

3

Great Palace Mosaics Museum / Sultanahmet

A focused visit built around surviving Byzantine floor mosaics from the Great Palace complex.

4

Topkapi Palace Museum / Sultanahmet

Ottoman court architecture, treasury collections and imperial rooms overlooking the Bosphorus and Golden Horn.

5

Hagia Sophia History & Experience Museum / Sultanahmet

An immersive interpretation of Hagia Sophia's Byzantine and Ottoman history, separate from the monument itself.

Continue your shortlist

Five more options, followed by practical planning notes.

6

Istanbul Modern / Karaköy

Türkiye's first museum of modern and contemporary art, now in a Renzo Piano-designed waterfront building.

7

Pera Museum / Tepebaşı

Orientalist painting, Anatolian weights and measures, Kütahya tiles and changing international exhibitions.

8

Rahmi M. Koç Museum / Hasköy

A large industrial museum on the Golden Horn with transport, engineering and communications collections.

9

Sakıp Sabancı Museum / Emirgan

Calligraphy, painting and temporary exhibitions in a Bosphorus mansion with landscaped grounds.

10

Istanbul Cinema Museum / Beyoğlu

Cinema heritage and interactive displays inside the restored Atlas Cinema complex on İstiklal Avenue.

SMART PLANNING

Sultanahmet museums combine well in one day; Karaköy and Beyoğlu form another compact cluster. Some museums close on Mondays or religious holidays. Museum passes do not cover every venue, so verify inclusions on the official ticket site.

Source checked July 2026: GoTürkiye, the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism, and official museum websites
<https://goturkiye.com/istanbul/museums>