

# Turkish *DELIGHT*

Turkey's commercial capital boasts more than its fair share of lavish, hidden treasures for lovers of boutique hotels, many of which come with views of this ancient metropolis.



## THE SOFA HOTEL

Istanbul's unofficial home of cool, the Sofa is an art hotel and sponsor of the city's annual art fair. With art gracing everywhere from reception to meeting space and each of the individually-designed guest rooms, expect the city's stylish set to be in attendance.

Located in trendy Nisantasi, this chic, minimalist Design Hotels haven was created by Turkish architect Sinan Kafadar and boasts 82 rooms including 17 suites and residences, each of which are dressed in blonde hard wood, marble, and brushed chrome. Bathrooms are especially lavish, with black and white mosaics flecked with gold and spacious 'wet rooms' with massage shower heads.

For the best room in the house head for one of the five Terrace Suites, each of which come with a spacious living room with a ample work space, a small kitchenette, and a private terrace with views across the city.

Finish days off with a tour of the hotel's Art 8\* terrace and gallery, before dinner in the cutting edge Supermarket by Longtable, an innovative dining concept that's as much about entertainment as it is about sustenance. From US\$228 per night, twin share; 41-41A Tesvikiye Caddesi, Nisantasi, Tel: +90 212 368 18 18; [www.thesofahotel.com](http://www.thesofahotel.com)





### THE BENTLEY

Located in the heart of the city, and within walking distance of some of Istanbul's top restaurants and shopping precincts, as well as the acclaimed Cemil Topuzlu Open Air Theatre, this Design Hotels member offers an understated sophistication and makes for the perfect base from which to explore Constantinople. Created by Italian architects Piero Lissoni and Nicoletta Canesi, the hotel's guest rooms reflect the fusion of cultures and traditions that make Istanbul such a great destination.

Be sure to get your hands on one of the eight spacious Floor Suites, preferably one above the 6th floor, for views of the Bosphorus. The kitchenette, with its espresso machine and appliances, comes in handy after visits to the city's Kasimpasa Kastamonu food markets, while the bathroom features a body massage shower, perfect for freshening up after sessions in the hotel's fitness centre. From US\$285 per night, twin share; 75 Halaskargazi Caddesi, Harbiye, +90 212 291 7730; [www.bentley-hotel.com](http://www.bentley-hotel.com)

### SUMAHAN ON THE WATER

This former 19th century distillery was once where 'suma', the favourite fig spirit of the Ottomans, was made, and overlooks one of the world's most important waterways. Now Turkish-American owner-architects Nedret and Mark Butler have transformed this unlikely family heirloom into a very special retreat for independent travellers. Regularly listed among the city's top pieces of waterside real estate, the award-winning Sumahan is located just outside Çengelköy, considered one of the last remaining Bosphorus neighborhoods.

Rooms are natural and elegant, with wood and marble, steel and brick throughout. Many rooms, including the four coveted two-level Loft Suites, come with their own Turkish Hammams, as well as floor-to-ceiling windows, living rooms with fireplaces and doors which open onto the retreat's manicured gardens.

At the end of a long day exploring the bazaars of the Old City, indulge in a signature Sultan Massage and body scrub, or steam away in the hotel's private Hammam, where guests wrapped in pestemals can perform the traditional bathing of past empires. From US\$420 per night, twin share; 51 Kuleli Caddesi, Çengelköy, Tel: +90 216 422 8000; [www.sumahan.com](http://www.sumahan.com)



### HOTEL LES OTTOMANS

Located on the banks of the iconic Bosphorus, and a member of Small Luxury Hotels of the World, this ten suite property is only minutes from the city's Atatürk International Airport yet offers a chic, design savvy home away from home for Turkey-bound travellers. Formerly an 18th century seaside mansion, Les Ottomans has been lovingly restored in an Ottoman-meets-fung shui fusion.

The hotel's rooms, each of which is unique, are spacious and lavish, and themed for the reigns of past sultans. Be sure to book ahead for the Bezmeilam Suite, a luxurious duplex named for the wife of Mahmud II, Bezmeilam Sultan, remembered as a charitable 'mother sultan'. The room features an Ottoman-styled vaulted ceiling and a Hammam in the bathroom.

Les Ottomans is also home to one of the best spas on the city's European banks; the Caudalie Vinotherapie, offers indulgent treatments, including the Pulp Friction Sculpting Massage which uses fresh grapes. The hotel also offers tours and airport transfers in its own speed boat. From US\$1,026 per night, twin share; 68 Muallim Naci Caddesi, Kurugesme, Tel: +90 212 359 1500; [www.lesottomans.com](http://www.lesottomans.com)