

Blue ribbon city

The world's largest airport is set for take-off in 2018, with an expected 150 million passengers passing over Istanbul's Bosphorus Strait – elegantly unravelling between Europe and Asia. *Upward Curve* reveals where to stay, what to see and what to eat

With Istanbul New Airport inauguration planned for early 2018, Turkey is reasserting authority on the global map. The €10bn investment is taking shape 35 kilometres northwest of the centre of Istanbul – and confidence in the region is returning.

Phase One is set to be operational by October, when the 11 million sq.ft development will take the crown as the largest airport terminal under one roof.

The four-phase project, culminating in the world's largest transport hub, is estimated to complete before 2030.

The first terminal will have the ability to serve 90 million passengers alone – and it is expected to include a Free Trade Zone that will complement business and commercial trade-based activities at the airport, having a far-reaching impact on trade volume in the Turkish economy. Add this to Istanbul's

melting pot of cultural influences and it becomes a very attractive place to do business.

STAY

Combining the finest in Byzantine and Ottoman architecture, Istanbul's luxury hotels reflect the far-reaching empires that have ruled the city. Examples of Genoese and Roman architecture also remain visible in some parts.

Marriott Group's St. Regis in the vibrant Nisantasi district is a

modernist Art Deco-influenced luxury hotel. Its restaurant, Spago, was the first international venue for American celebrity chef Wolfgang Puck, and it is named after his legendary Sunset Strip restaurant.

Elsewhere, Four Seasons converted a former 19th-century Ottoman palace on the banks of the Bosphorus and opened its doors in 2008 as a chic city retreat. The Palace, formerly known as Atik Pasha, was built as a secondary residence close to the Sultan's principal Summer Palace on the famous river.

The spirit of world-famous Singapore hotel Raffles arrived in 2014 as a second European venue – after Paris. At 143 metres high, the views are unparalleled over Istanbul's luxury shopping region and the stunning Bosphorus river. Raffles Spa, one of the largest



in the city, offers everything from Turkish baths to eastern massages for the ultimate rest and rejuvenation experience.

Raffles, Istanbul

raffles.com/istanbul

Four Seasons Hotel Istanbul at the Bosphorus

fourseasons.com/bosphorus

The St. Regis, Istanbul

thestregisistanbul.com

DRINKS AND DINNER

Istanbul is making a strong recovery after a tumultuous 2016 and the spirited nightlife beat goes on. The vivacious Bosphorus region remains the most glamorous after-hours haunt.

Bernie Ecclestone frequents Nar Lokanta, a traditional Turkish restaurant with dishes that recall Ottoman recipes dating back thousands of years. Nar includes an indoor dining room, three terraces and a rooftop for the private parties in warmer months.

For something a little different, Maiden's Tower stands proudly on a tiny island 200 metres off-shore in the intersection of the Bosphorus, where the two continents of Asia and Europe meet. The tower's history stretches back 2,500 years and now offers a quite unique dining experience – starting with the compulsory boat trip to get there.

Situated atop the Swissôtel, 16 Roof boasts stunning views of the Bosphorus and contemporary world cuisine with unique flavors complemented by imported and Turkish wines.

Maiden's Tower

kizkulesi.com.tr

Nar Lokanta

narlokantasi.com

16 Roof

swissotel.com

SEE

Amidst a wealth of must-see historic and cultural monuments, a Bosphorus Strait dinner cruise or private yacht lunch offers a full and fitting appreciation of this magnificent city – across both continents.

The iconic Blue Mosque is one particular highlight. Its 20,000 striking blue tiles, six minarets, grand entrances and 260 windows

offer an awe-inspiring example of sixteenth-century Iznik design.

For luxury shopping, head to Bagdat Avenue – and in particular the Lokum boutique – but for a more authentic experience, try the Egyptian Bazaar where high end, luxurious local products are available to purchase.

For those craving further mental stimulation, Salt is one of the premier galleries in Istanbul.

Or for mental relaxation, head to Buyukada, a quaint and picturesque island which is the largest of the nine so-called Princes' Islands in the Sea of Marmara south east of the city.

Bosphorus Cruise Tour

bosporusyacht.com

How To Istanbul

howtoistanbul.com

Luxury Istanbul

luxuryistanbul.com ■

Opposite: The 15 July Martyrs Bridge is one of three suspension bridges spanning the Bosphorus Strait – over the famous Blue Mosque Above: Four Seasons Hotel Istanbul at the Bosphorus is a former 19th-century Ottoman palace Left: The Maiden's Tower restaurant on the Asian side of Istanbul – inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2000 – only accessed by boat

