

TRANSPORT

THINGS CHANGE...

The information in this chapter is particularly vulnerable to change. Check directly with the airline or a travel agent to make sure you understand how a fare (and ticket you may buy) works and be aware of the security requirements for international travel. Shop carefully. The details given in this chapter should be regarded as pointers and are not a substitute for your own careful, up-to-date research.

As it's the national capital in all but name, getting to İstanbul is easy. There are two international airports, two *otogars* (bus stations) from which international services arrive and depart, and two international rail stations.

Flights, tours and rail tickets can be booked at www.lonelyplanet.com/travel_services.

AIR

Airlines

Most of İstanbul's airline offices are in the streets around Taksim Sq, particularly Cumhuriyet Caddesi (see [Map p113](#)), but Turkish Airlines has offices around the city. Travel agencies can also sell air tickets and make reservations. The two major airlines flying domestic routes are [Turkish Airlines](#) (www.thy.com) and [Onur Air](#) (www.onurair.com.tr), though [Atlasjet](#) (www.atlasjet.com), [Sun Express](#) (www.sunexpress.com) and [Pegasus Airlines](#) (www.flypgs.com) also fly routes.

Airports

The city's main airport, [Atatürk International Airport](#) (Atatürk Hava Limanı; ☎ 212-465 5555; www.ataturkairport.com), is in Yeşilköy, 23km west of Sultanahmet. The international terminal (Dış Hatlar) is polished and organised. Close by, the domestic terminal (İç Hatlar) is smaller but no less efficient. The city's second international airport, [Sabiha Gökçen International Airport](#) (☎ 216-585 5000; www.sgairport.com) at Pendik/Kurtköy on the Asian side of the city, is popular with low-cost European airlines, but is not as conveniently located.

There are car-hire desks, exchange offices, stands of mobile-phone companies, a 24-hour pharmacy, ATMs and a PTT (post office) at the international arrivals area at Atatürk Interna-

tional Airport. There is also a [Tourist Information Desk](#) (☎ 212-465 3451; ☎ 9am-11pm) supplying maps, advice and brochures. A 24-hour supermarket is at the walkway to the metro. The 24-hour [left-luggage service](#) (☎ 212-465 3442) charges TL15 to TL20 per suitcase per 24 hours; you'll find the booth to your right as you exit customs.

One of the few annoying things about Atatürk airport is that travellers must pay to use a trolley on either side of immigration. You can pay in lira (TL) or euros (€), which you get back when you return the trolley.

There's a bank, mini-market and PTT at Sabiha Gökçen airport. Use of trolleys there is free of charge.

BOAT

Cruise Ships

Cruise ships arrive at the [Karaköy International Maritime Passenger Terminal](#) ([Map pp102-3](#); ☎ 212-249 5776), just near the Galata Bridge.

Ferries & Seabuses

The most enjoyable way to get around town is by ferry. Crossing between the Asian and

FERRY TRAVEL

Ferries ply the following useful two-way routes:

- Beşiktaş-Kadıköy
- Beşiktaş-Üsküdar
- Eminönü-Anadolu Kavağı (Bosphorus Excursions Ferry)
- Eminönü-Kadıköy
- Eminönü-Üsküdar
- İstinye-Emirgan-Kanlıca-Anadolu Hisarı-Kandilli-Bebek-Arnavutköy-Çengelköy
- Kabataş-Kadıköy
- Kabataş-Kadıköy-Kınalada-Burgazada-Heybeliada-Büyükdada (Princes' Islands ferry)
- Kabataş-Üsküdar
- Karaköy-Kadıköy (some stop at Haydarpaşa)
- Karaköy-Üsküdar
- Sarıyer-Rumeli Kavağı-Anadolu Kavağı
- Sirkeci-Harem
- Üsküdar-Karaköy-Eminönü-Kasımpaşa-Fener-Balat-Hasköy-Ayvansaray-Sütlüce-Eyüp (Golden Horn Ferry)

CLIMATE CHANGE & TRAVEL

Climate change is a serious threat to the ecosystems that humans rely upon, and air travel is the fastest-growing contributor to the problem. Lonely Planet regards travel, overall, as a global benefit, but believes we all have a responsibility to limit our personal impact on global warming.

Flying & Climate Change

Pretty much every form of motorised travel generates carbon dioxide (the main cause of human-induced climate change) but planes are far and away the worst offenders, not just because of the sheer distances they allow us to travel, but because they release greenhouse gases high into the atmosphere. The statistics are frightening: two people taking a return flight between Europe and the US will contribute as much to climate change as an average household's gas and electricity consumption over a whole year.

Carbon Offset Schemes

Climatecare.org and other websites use 'carbon calculators' that allow travellers to offset the level of greenhouse gases they are responsible for with financial contributions to sustainable travel schemes that reduce global warming – including projects in India, Honduras, Kazakhstan and Uganda.

Lonely Planet, together with Rough Guides and other concerned partners in the travel industry, support the carbon offset scheme run by climatecare.org. Lonely Planet offsets all of its staff and author travel.

For more information check out our website: www.lonelyplanet.com.

European shores, these vessels are as efficient as they are popular with locals. The **Istanbul Deniz Otobüsleri** (İDO; ☎ 212-444 4436; www.ido.com.tr) has fare and timetable information or you can pick up a printed timetable at an *iskelesi* (ferry dock).

On the European side, the major ferry docks are at the mouth of the Golden Horn (Eminönü, Sirkeci and Karaköy), at Beşiktaş and at Kabataş, 2km past the Galata Bridge, at the end of the tram line from the airport and Sultanahmet.

Information regarding ferry service times is found here and in the Ferry Trips chapter (p202). The ferries run to two annual timetables: winter (mid-September to mid-June) and summer (mid-June to mid-September). Tickets (*jetons*) are cheap (usually TL1.50) and it's possible to use an Akbil, İstanbulkart or beşİBiryerde card (see the boxed text p220) on most routes.

There are also *deniz otobüsü* and *hızlı feribot* (seabus and fast ferry) services, but these ply routes that are of less interest to the traveller; they are also more expensive than the conventional ferries. The most useful of these routes are Bostancı-Karaköy-Eminönü, Yenikapı-Bandırma (for İzmir), Sarayburnu-Avşa, Kadıköy-Kabataş-Sarıyer and Kabataş-Princes' Islands-Bostancı.

BUS

The **Büyük İstanbul Otogarı** (Big İstanbul Bus Station; ☎ 212-658 0505; www.otogaristanbul.com, in Turkish) is

the city's main bus station for both intercity and international routes. Called simply the *otogar* (bus station), it's in the western district of Bayrampaşa, just south of the expressway and about 10km west of Sultanahmet. There's an ATM here, a few cafes and unspeakably filthy toilets. The LRT service from Aksaray stops here (Otogar stop) on its way from the airport; you can catch this to Aksaray and then connect with a tram to Sultanahmet. If you're going to Beyoğlu, bus 830 leaves from the centre of the *otogar* every 15 minutes between 5.50am and 8.45pm and takes approximately one hour to reach Taksim Sq. Bus 910 leaves for Eminönü every 15 to 25 minutes between 6am and 8.45pm; the trip takes approximately 50 minutes. Both trips cost TL1.50. A taxi will cost approximately TL25 to Sultanahmet, TL30 to Taksim.

Some bus companies offer a free *servis* (shuttle bus) between the *otogar* and Taksim Sq. If you're booking a ticket out of İstanbul from a bus office in Taksim (or elsewhere), ask about this service. You'll be asked to front up at the bus office around an hour before your bus is due to leave and a minibus will pick you up and take you from the office to your bus at the *otogar*. If you've just arrived by bus in İstanbul, ask your bus driver about a *servis* to the company's bus office in Taksim or elsewhere.

There's a smaller bus station on the Asian shore of the Bosphorus at **Harem** (Map pp46–7;