

Western Districts

Neighbourhood Top Five

- 1 Admiring the exquisite mosaics and frescoes adorning the interior of one of İstanbul's Byzantine treasures, the **Kariye Museum** (Chora Church; p108).
- 2 Taking a ferry up the Golden Horn to visit **Eyüp** (p113), home to İstanbul's most important Islamic shrine.
- 3 Visiting the Greek Orthodox **Patriarchal Church of St George** (p112), one of Turkey's major pilgrimage destinations.
- 4 Sampling dishes enjoyed by Süleyman the Magnificent and other sultans at **Asitane** (p115) restaurant.
- 5 Exploring the streets around the **Yavuz Sultan Selim Mosque** (p111) in the fascinating Çarşamba district.



For more detail of this area see Map p252 ➔

Explore: Western Districts

It's a great shame that so few visitors head to this fascinating part of town. Try to dedicate at least one day of your stay to exploring the area; two would be better.

Spend the first of these taking the Golden Horn ferry trip from Eminönü, first alighting at Ayvansaray to visit the Kariye Museum (Chora Church) and then continuing to Eyüp (p113).

If you are able to spend a second day here, we highly recommend that you start your day in the Bazaar District and then continue uphill towards the Fatih and Yavuz Sultan Selim Mosques.

Note that these districts are deathly quiet at night and on Sundays, so you're best off exploring during the day on weekdays or Saturday.

Local Life

➔ **Produce shopping** Locals shop along Fevzi Paşa Caddesi in Fatih, on Murat Molla Caddesi in Çarşamba, along Vodina Caddesi in Balat and at the Çarşamba Pazarı (Wednesday Market) in Fatih.

➔ **Gathering spots** Popular local gathering spots include the terrace of the Yavuz Sultan Selim Mosque (p111) and the forecourts of the Eyüp Sultan Mosque (p114) and Fatih Mosque (p111).

➔ **Ferry hopping** Regular commuters enjoy catching up with friends and neighbours over a glass of tea on the Haliç (Golden Horn) ferry.

Getting There & Away

➔ **Ferry** The most enjoyable way to access these suburbs is to take the Haliç (Golden Horn) ferry from Eminönü, which stops at Ayvansaray near Edirnekapi and at Eyüp.

➔ **Bus** Regular services travel from Eminönü along Mürsel Paşa Caddesi (at various points also called Abdülezel Paşa Caddesi and Sadrazam Ali Paşa Caddesi), which follows the shore of the Golden Horn through Balat, Fener and Ayvansaray and on to Eyüp. From Eminönü there are also regular services to Fatih and Edirnekapi along Fevzi Paşa Caddesi (the continuation of Macar Kardeşler and Şehzadebaşı Caddesi). We have provided information about relevant bus routes in our reviews.

Lonely Planet's Top Tip

If you plan to visit Fatih, try to do so on Wednesdays, when the Çarşamba Pazarı (Wednesday Market) is held in the streets around the Fatih Mosque.

Best Places to Eat & Drink

- ➔ Asitane (p115)
- ➔ Pierre Loti Café (p115)

For reviews, see p115. ➔

Best Churches

- ➔ Patriarchal Church of St George (p112)
- ➔ Church of St Stephen of the Bulgars (p114)
- ➔ Church of St Mary of the Mongols (p112)

For reviews, see p111. ➔

Best Byzantine Sites

- ➔ Kariye Museum (p108)
- ➔ Fethiye Museum (p111)

For reviews, see p108. ➔