

## A 90-Minute Walk from Taksim Square to the Istanbul Modern Art Museum

It was in the Pera district that Constantinople's cosmopolitan population lived and worked in the 19th century, where the embassies and palatial residences mirrored the lifestyle of Topkapı Palace, on the opposite side of the Golden Horn. Once known as the "Paris of the East", life centred on the main street of Pera, today's İstiklâl Caddesi. Even today the Avrupa Pasajı and Balık Pazar markets seem wistfully unchanged, especially when contrasted with the remarkable Pera Museum and the sophisticated Istanbul Modern Art Museum.



Avrupa Pasajı bazaar ⑥

### Along İstiklâl Caddesi

Begin the walk in Taksim Square ① at the Independence Monument, completed by Pietro Canonica in 1928, that depicts Atatürk with his political contemporaries. Before following the vintage tram line down İstiklâl Caddesi, have a look at the octagonal stone tower, known as the Maksem ②, on the corner of Taksim Caddesi. Dating from 1832, it was once used as a reservoir – you can still see carved bird houses and remains of a fountain. It now houses an art gallery. On your right is the French Cultural Centre, while on the left, further down at No. 127 is a traditional sweet shop, Hacı Bekir, dating from 1777. Saray Muhallebicisi ③ is perfect for a coffee and one of the renowned pastries.

### Market shopping

Pass Yeşilcam Sokak, the home of Turkish cinema, and at Şarabi Wine House, turn into the former flower

market, Çiçek Pasajı ④, built by Italian architect Michel Capello in 1856, and now filled with restaurants. At Stop Restaurant, veer left then right on Şahne Sokak, which forms the backbone of the Fish Market, or Balık Pazar ⑤.

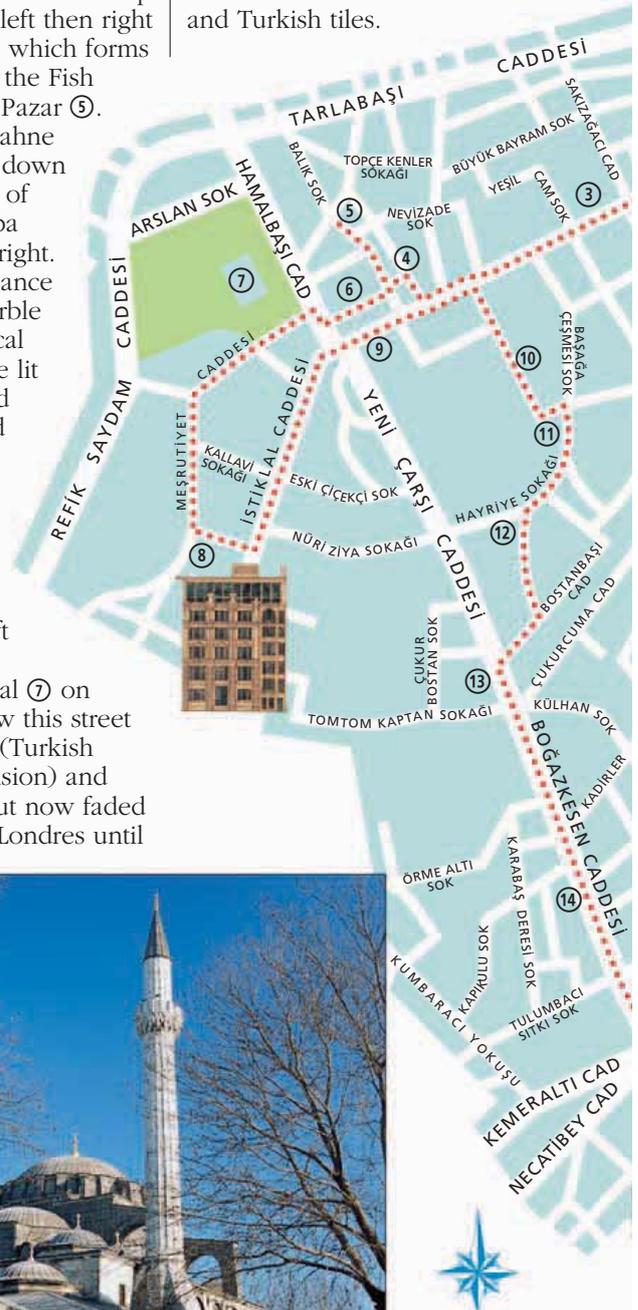
Return along Sahne Sokak and stroll down the arcaded Hall of Mirrors, or Avrupa Pasajı ⑥ on the right. The Neo-Renaissance interior, with marble floors and classical statues, was once lit by gas lamps and mirrors amplified the light.

Turn right and then left onto Meşrutiyet Caddesi and follow the road around to the left with the British Consulate General ⑦ on your right. Follow this street down, past TRT (Turkish Radio and Television) and the celebrated but now faded Grand Hotel de Londres until



A Çiçek Pasajı restaurant ④

you reach the exquisite Pera Museum ⑧ (once the Bristol Hotel), where the philanthropic Koç family exhibits their art collection and Turkish tiles.



Dome of the Kılıç Ali Paşa Mosque ⑬

**Historic buildings**

Walk through the Odakule Arkade and turn left on to İstiklâl Caddesi. Opposite the Galatasary High School is the Old Beyoğlu Post Office ⑨. A campaign to keep it open was unsuccessful and the Baroque marble building was closed in 1998. Originally a wealthy merchant's residence, it still has an ornamental fountain in the penthouse.

Take the second right onto Tornacıbaşı Sokak,



Istanbul Modern Art Museum ⑳

**TIPS FOR WALKERS**

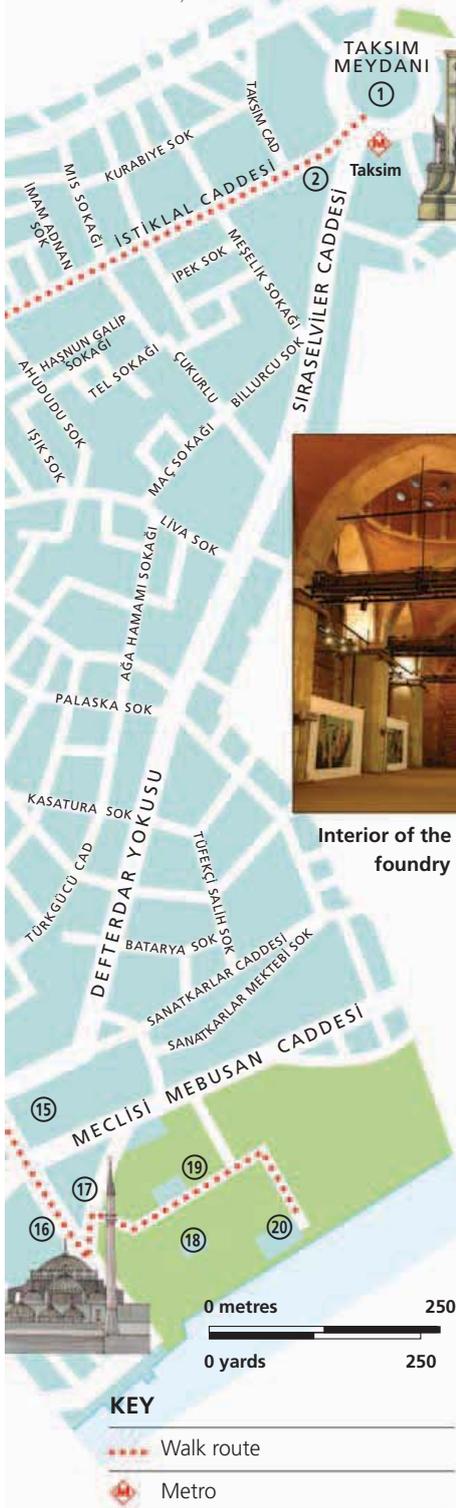
**Starting point:** Taksim Square.

**Length:** 2.5 km (1.5 miles).

**Getting there:** From

Sultanahmet, take the tramway to Karaköy, from where you can ride the Tünel funicular train to Tünel Square at the southern end of İstiklâl Caddesi in Beyoğlu. Travel up İstiklâl Caddesi by nostalgic tram to Taksim Square.

**Stopping-off points:** The fish market on Sahne Sokak has lots of cheerful eateries. French Street is ideal for an elegant drink.



which takes you past the Greek Orthodox school, Zografyon ⑩ on the left. In front of you is Galatasaray Hamamı ⑪, Turkish baths built in 1481 and in use ever since.

Take the steep cobbled street that descends beside the Turkish baths, Çapanoğlu Sokak, which becomes a staircase at the bottom. Turn

right onto Harbiye Sokak and you will reach French Street, or Fransız Sokağı ⑫ on the left, where an elegant French ambience meets classy Beyoğlu. Enjoy lunch or a glass of wine at one of the French-style cafés.

Refreshed, continue along French Street and at the end turn right onto Boğazkesen Caddesi and

continue left down the hill until you reach Tomtom Kaptan Mosque ⑬. The 17th-century fountain here, which was once a grand landmark, is now sadly neglected.



Interior of the Tophane foundry ⑮

**Shopping and museums**

Çukurcuma Caddesi and Tomtom Kaptan Sokak intersect here and both have curio shops such as Tüterler ⑭ at No. 186. At the bottom of this street on the corner of Defterdar Yokuşu is the Tophane ⑮, once an Ottoman cannon foundry.

Cross Necatibey Caddesi over the tramline to the 16th-century Kılıç Ali Paşa Mosque ⑯ (see p106), one of the last masterpieces of architect Mimar Sinan. Opposite is the Tophane fountain ⑰ (see p106) built in 1732, which now bestows locally bottled drinking water. From here you can also see the Baroque Clock Tower ⑱.

Continue left along Salı Pazarı ⑲ with its shops, restaurants and narghile (pipe) smokers. A sign directs you to the Istanbul Modern Art Museum ⑳ (see p107), with its collection of contemporary Turkish art.

To get back to the city centre, catch the west-bound tram which takes you directly back to Sultanahmet over the Galata Bridge.



Pera Museum ⑧