



# ISTANBUL

Bazaar's guide to Istanbul

**KEMPINSKI CIGARAN PALACE**  
Overlooking the Bosphorus, the luxurious Imperial Cigaran Palace was the residence of the last Ottoman Sultans, entirely rebuilt in marble in 1857. The lavish five-star hotel is a must, with everyone from Prince Charles to Giorgio Armani checking in. Its gorgeous pool, private boat and helicopter service are just some of the perks. For a real taste of Turkey, try the Ottoman tasting menu at Tagra with the spicy humus and Dolma vine leave wraps 'meze' appetizers, steamed shrimps, lamb 'börek' (a sort of pastry ravioli) and sticky sweet Baklava pistachio pastries for desert. Delicious.

**EMPRESS ZOE HOTEL**  
The Old Turkish townhouses that make up the Empress Zoe hotel are set in the heart of Sultanahmet. The historical centre of the city is home to the Topkapi Palace, the Grand Bazaar, the Blue Mosque and the Aghia Sophia. A charming hotel, it's rustic chic with oodles of character. Each room is individually decorated with wooden furniture, local fabrics and original Islamic art, and the essentials, like air-con, wifi and stylish stone bathrooms. Check into the Penthouse Suite for the best views, or head to the rooftop terrace overlooking the city's mosques and minarets all the way to the Marmara sea.

By Rowena Carr-Allinson 11 August 2010

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**Don't miss:**  
The authentic Hamam Turkish Bath.

**Don't miss:**  
Breakfast in the garden, an archeological oasis, set on the ruins of Isak Pasha's Turkish bath house dating back to 1483.

**Kempinski Cigaran Palace**, a Grand deluxe sea view from €583.20 a night, a Park view palace two bedroom Suite, €1,996 a night. **Empress Zoe Hotel**, a Penthouse suite including private terrace with view of the blue mosque, from €200 a night.

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