

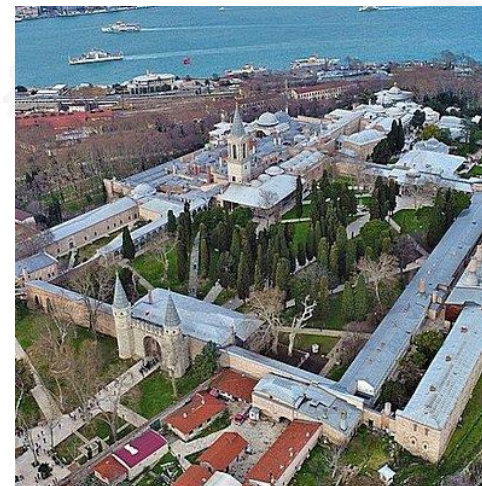
# Istanbul Turkey

Sunday April 24 to Monday April 25 2022 16:00 to 16:00



# Istanbul Overview

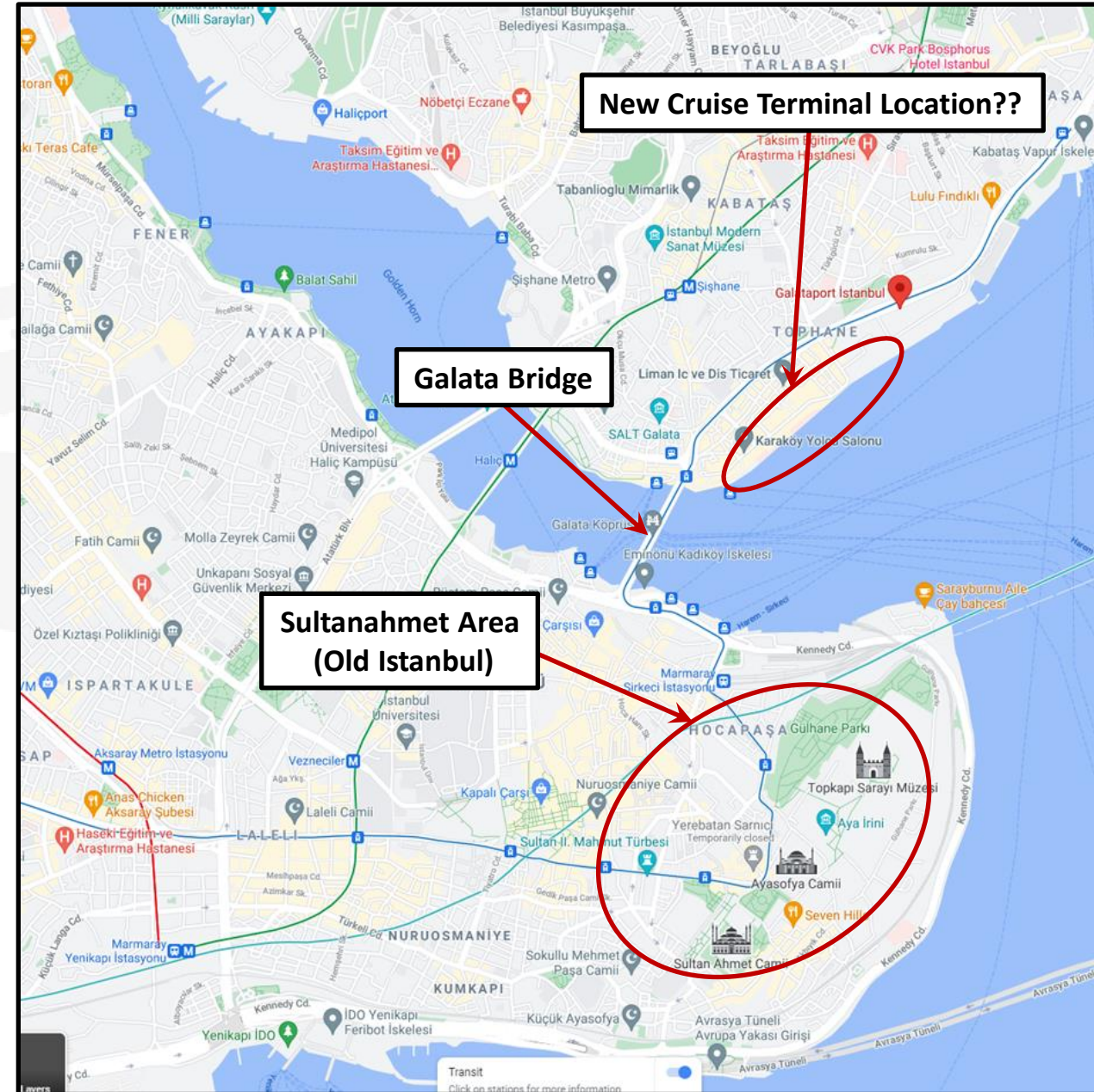
- One of the world's most known and great cities
- Also known as Constantinople and Byzantium
- Crossroads between East and West on the "Silk Road" of ancient times
- 15 Million People and the largest city in Europe and 20% of the population of Turkey\*
- Also the world's 15th largest city\*
- Weather:
  - average high-temperature is 59.5°F(15.3°), and the average low-temperature is 49.8°F(9.9°C).
  - average relative humidity is 70%.
  - Average rain: 12.6 days, with typically 1.14" (29mm) of accumulated precipitation





# Istanbul “At the Port”

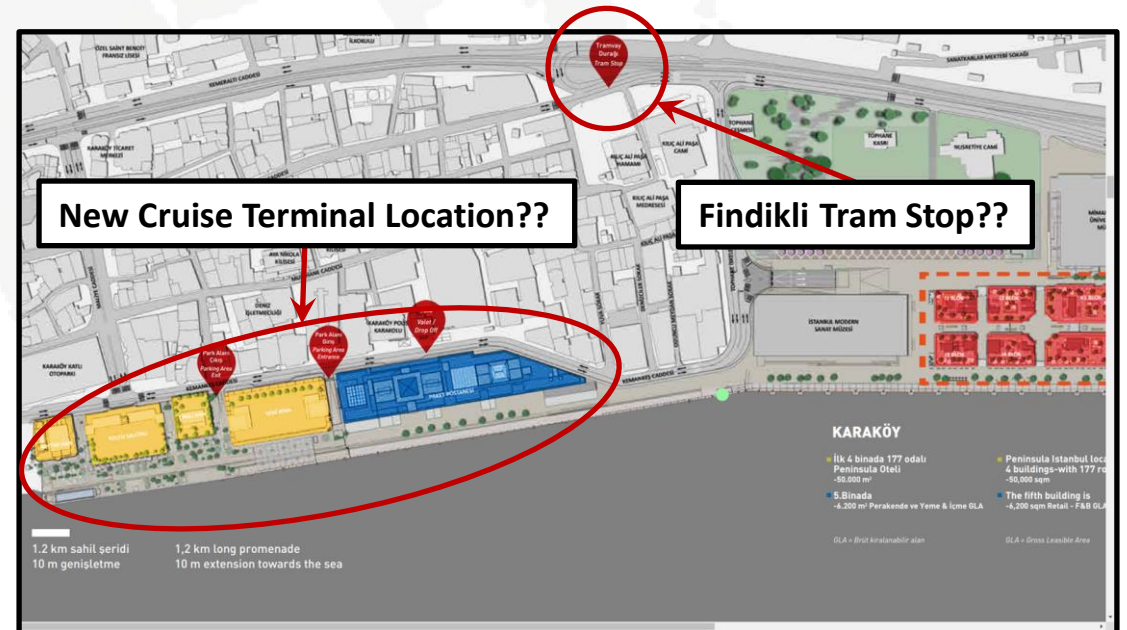
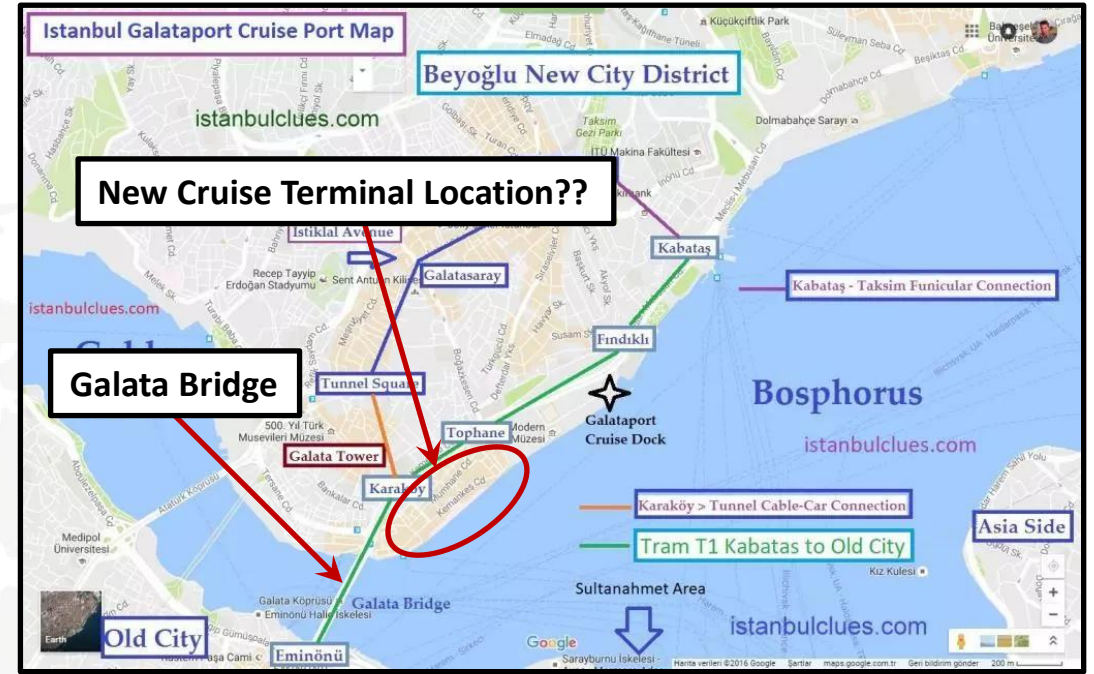
- Be up on deck as we approach the city
  - The city skyline will not disappoint
  - Starboard side (right side for us retired US Air Force folks 😊) of ship should provide best view for ships docking overnight (we will be staying overnight)
- Ship will dock at the northern end of the Galata Bridge
  - Present Passenger terminal doesn't have much to offer— even tax free store is now closed
  - New Galataport Cruise Terminal scheduled to open in August 2021 (more on this in a minute)
- Getting Around
  - Tram to Sultanahmet (Best way) just outside of the cruise port
  - Taxis—Ask tour desk what is appropriate fare to Sultanahmet area and negotiate price with driver—they will ignore meter
  - Can walk across Galata Bridge to Sultanahmet
    - Lower level is pedestrian and has restaurants etc. Upper level is for traffic
    - Estimate ~2-3 Miles to walk (although bridge itself is only about 1600 ft (~0.5 km).





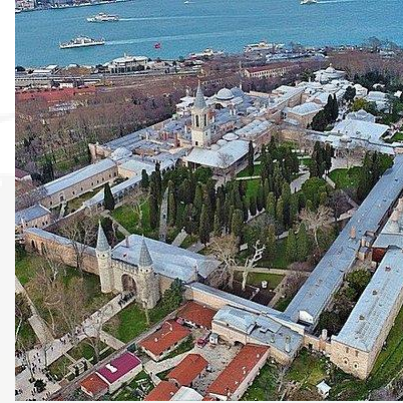
# Istanbul “Getting Around (cont)”

- More on the new Galataport Cruise Port Project (from article dtd Mar 2021)
- The tram (T1 Line) is the major public transport vehicle to commute between the Old City and Modern Istanbul. It basically operates between to terminal stops: Kabatas – Bagcilar.
- The nearest TRAM STOP to Istanbul Cruise Ship Terminal Galataport is Findikli Tram Station.
  - Departs every 5 minutes
  - Buy red tokens from vending machines (~3 Turkish Lira about \$0.35 USD)
- The rules are pretty basic. If you would like to go Modern Istanbul (Taksim Square, Besiktas, Ortakoy, Bebek) you need to take the tram in the direction of KABATAS.
- If you would like to see the Istanbul Historical Peninsula (Spice Bazaar, Hagia Sophia, Blue Mosque, Grand Bazaar etc.) you need to take the tram in the direction of BAGCILAR.
- Of Course, can always take Taxis and Ferries.



# Istanbul “What to see and do”

- Topkapi Palace: \$28 USD “on your own”
  - Includes Harem and all other sections
  - Hours: 0900-1800 daily. Closed Tuesdays. Plan at least 1.5 – 2.0 hrs for touring
  - Can do “VIP” tour and skip lines (~\$33 USD)
- Sultan Summer Palace (Beylerbeyi Palace): ~\$6 USD. Hours: 0900-1700. Closed on Mondays
- Grand Bazaar: Free, Hours: 0900-1900 and closed on Sundays. However, may be closed during Ramadan too which is ongoing during our visit
- Hagia Sophia (“Holy Wisdom” in Greek): Free—now a mosque. Respect Islamic dress traditions and prayer times. Open every day 0900-1700
- Blue Mosque: Free, closed at prayer times. Unsure of opening hours for visitors—0900-1700. Did find mention that cruise ship tours often there from 0900-1000 and make it difficult to visit 😊
- Basilica Cistern (underground Aquaphor): \$2.50 USD. Hours 0900-1730.
- Whirling Dervishes: \$30 and up available on TripAdvisor, Viator, etc.
- Buy Rugs—an experience in and of itself 😊





# HAL Offerings

- Note on HAL offerings:
  - Concentrates solely on the Sultanahmet (Old Istanbul) area
  - Will be on your own if you want to tour the more modern parts of Istanbul
- Sightseeing and Culutre Tours 1<sup>st</sup> day
  - Driving/Dinner tours/cruises of Sultanahmet (Old Istanbul) and the Bosphorus
  - 2 Dutch, German, and Spanish language tours available
  - Duration: 2-4 Hours. Costs: ~\$50-\$350 USD.
    - Private Car for 2 people is ~250 USD. Less than group tour by at \$350 USD
- Sightseeing and Culutre Tours 2<sup>nd</sup> day
  - Driving/Dinner tours/cruises of Sultanahmet (Old Istanbul) and the Bosphorus
  - Only English and 1 Spanish language tours available on 2<sup>nd</sup> day
  - Duration: 2-4 Hours. Costs: ~\$50-\$500+ USD.
    - Byzantine Tour is also offered—focus on Christian Churches—4.5 hrs and ~80 USD cost

