

PUBLICATION

Baker's Dozen: 13 Things You Must Do in Istanbul

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Claire Haltom, a health law shareholder in Baker Donelson's Nashville office, recently visited Istanbul, Turkey with her family. We asked Claire what to do and what not to miss in the city of Constantinople.

Where to Stay

(1) Situated two blocks from the Hagia Sophia and the Blue Mosque, [the Four Seasons Hotel – Sultanahmet](#) is a gorgeous property housed in an old prison. The rooftop bar provides exceptional views of the local landmarks at night. (2) In the mood for a resort experience? [The Four Seasons Hotel – Bosphorous](#) is 20 minutes from its sister property and offers stunning views of the Bosphorous Strait, the body of water that divides the European side of Istanbul and the Asian side of Istanbul.

What to Do

(3) No trip to Istanbul is complete without a visit to the [Hagia Sophia](#), (4) the Blue Mosque and (5) the Basilica Cistern. (6) The Topkapi Palace is one of the most well-preserved Ottoman palaces and offers a unique glimpse into Ottoman lifestyle. (7) If you're in the mood for a true Turkish experience, schedule a Turkish bath at the [Ayasofya Hamami](#). Built in 1556, the bath closed in 1910, but was reopened in 2012 after a spectacular renovation.

Where to Eat

(8) If you want to eat like a Sultan, book a sunset table at Tugra, a palace-turned five-star hotel, situated on the edge of the Bosphorous Strait. (9) For a more casual dining experience, try Khorasani – a delicious street café with authentic Turkish dishes. (10) Make sure you sample the Turkish Delight and Baklava before heading home – the [Hafiz Mustafa](#) café is a charming spot near the Blue Mosque where you can try more than two dozen flavors.

Where to Shop

Istanbul is a shopper's paradise. (11) The legendary Grand Bazaar is a covered maze of more than 5,000 shops. Here you can find just about anything – including Turkish rugs and antiques. (12) For a more curated experience, stop by Sofa Art & Antiques which is filled with impeccably collected items at reasonable prices (I picked up an original oil painting by an Istanbul artist for less than \$300). (13) Whether it's Turkish rugs, textiles, artwork or antiques, make sure you save plenty of room in your suitcase for the trip back home.