



A Traveller's Companion to Istanbul

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The history of the city where East meets West spans 28 centuries. Istanbul, the ancient and timeless heart of modern Turkey, is a city with its mythological origins in the seventh century BC. Founded as Constantinople, the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire by Constantine the Great, during the 1000-year Byzantine Empire that followed it was a city of fabled riches. After its fall to the Turks in 1453, the splendors of the Ottoman Empire kept it glorious. Drawing on diaries, letters, memoirs, histories and novels from the sixth-century AD onwards, this inspiring anthology recreates the vanished glories of the city, and includes: coronation of a Byzantine emperor; funeral of a sultan; triumphal entry of Mehmet the Conqueror; building of the Süleymaniye, the most magnificent of the city's mosques; harems in the sixteenth century; death of Atatürk in 1938; Byzantine holy relics; Turkish baths and coffee-houses. All this and much more is vividly described in the words of those who were actually there, to offer an original and indispensable companion for the discriminating traveller.

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