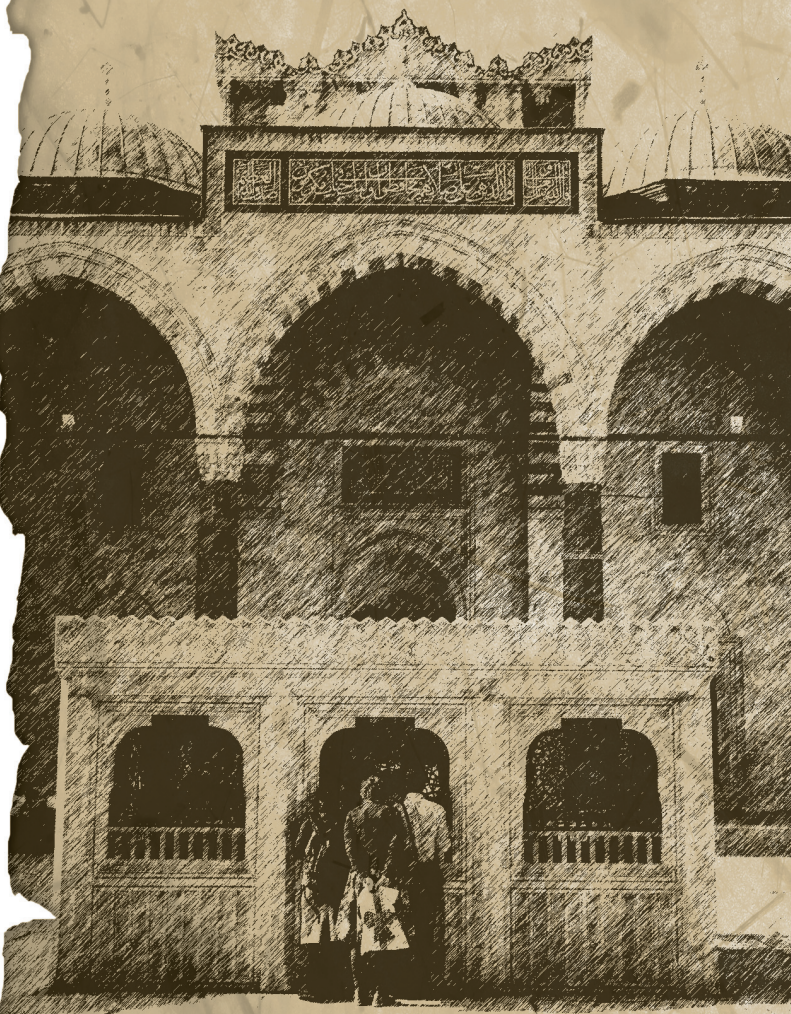
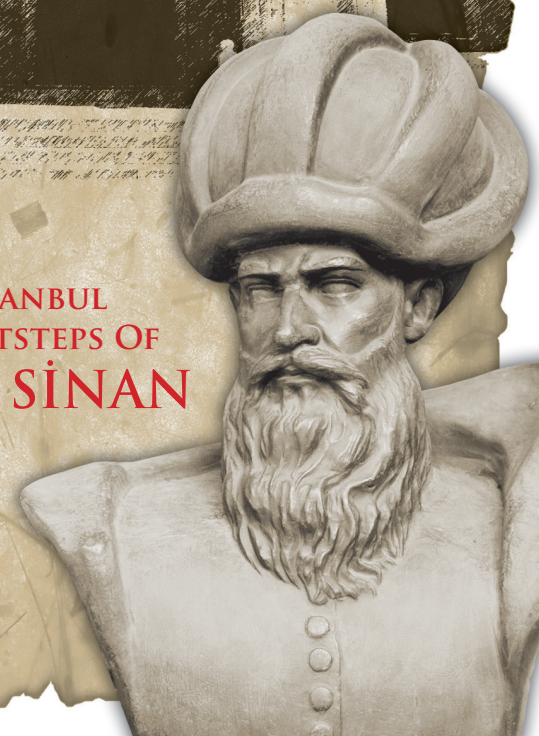


Turkey



TOUR OF İSTANBUL  
IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF  
MİMAR SİNAN

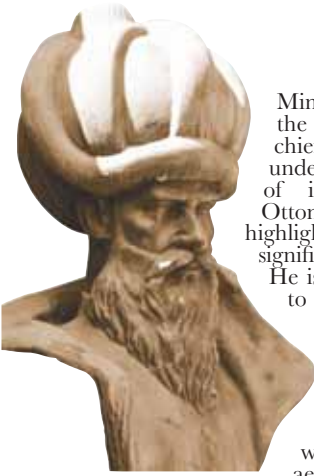


Turkey





MİMAR SİNAN &  
İSTANBUL



Mimar Sinan (Sinan the Architect), the 16th-century master architect and chief administrator of public works under three Sultans, is the designer of important masterpieces of superb Ottoman architecture. His works have highlighted the magnificence of the most significant period of the Ottoman Empire.

He is therefore the first name that springs to mind when considering Ottoman architecture. Calling him an architect is not enough though – he was a genius and the creator of works that were considered impossible to achieve by mere mortals. He was a superb artist since each of his works reflects his continual pursuit for aesthetics and elegance. His work rate was unprecedented with his buildings

encompassing the whole of the vast domain of the Ottoman Empire. His scientific pursuit of exploring beyond the limits of engineering reflects his intellectual capacity. In a sense he was the equivalent of an intellectual from the European Renaissance. Describing him by his profession “*mimar*” (architect) is inadequate, even during those times and so he was referred to as the “*mimarlar mimari*” (architect of all architects).

Sinan embodied architecture. In his memoirs, when expressing his soul, he used the metaphor of a set of compasses, which is one of the essential architectural tools, and thereby giving us a real insight into his personality. He was as steady as the pivot arm of the compasses, always trying until he achieved the best, and he was as mobile as the drawing arm of the compasses, always pursuing new horizons and new ideas by travelling to new places and visiting other masterpieces. Using this symbolism he designed his final resting place, his tomb, which seems very plain when compared to all the masterpieces he created, in the form of set of compasses.

Mimar Sinan described the Selimiye Mosque in Edirne as his main work during his period of mastery. However, because of his humble approach, overlooking the works he previously accomplished would be a great irreverence to his genius. Even if he did not acknowledge all of his works are the outcome of his superb mastery and unique talent. Other magnificent old architectural masterpieces pale into insignificance when compared with the works of Mimar Sinan. With his works he constantly amazed all those who had been mesmerized by the masterpieces of earlier architects and who thought that such mastery could not be surpassed. All those years ago, he developed very advanced ideas for buildings that could resist powerful earthquakes, something which is still a major consideration for present day architecture. He preferred to use long-lasting materials in his buildings such as fire stone (a greenish coloured volcanic tuff quarried near the Sea of Marmara and renowned for its strength and fire resistance), and developed an earthquake-resistant foundation system. He paid great attention to the acoustics









in the buildings he created and also developed quite intricate ventilation systems, parts of which have remained unexplained to the present day.

Although Mimar Sinan completed more than three hundred works during his lifetime, the buildings that he is most well known for are mosques. His legacy was carried to the far corners of the earth by his apprentices such as Davud Agha and Sedefkar Mehmet Agha. The Sultan Ahmet Mosque in İstanbul, which has become a symbol of the city, and the Taj Mahal in Agra, India, were designed and built by those who were trained by Mimar Sinan and took their revered place in the history of the world's architecture.

And İstanbul...Every view is fit for a picture postcard, and the city is like an open air museum where its famous silhouette has been greatly enhanced by the buildings created by Mimar Sinan. Sinan's signature in this unique city is the buildings standing among the imposing hills. For him, İstanbul was the city where he fulfilled his architectural dreams and designs and wrote his name in golden letters in the history of architecture. During the military campaigns he took part in as well as the journeys he made around the world, he was inspired by the buildings he had seen and he used his experiences and observations in the buildings he designed and built in İstanbul. Therefore calling İstanbul 'the City of Mimar Sinan' is not an exaggeration. Not only did he design the main capital buildings but he also played an important role in the urban design of İstanbul. As a master of urban design, with great insight, he demolished buildings which did not fit in with overall look of İstanbul and built wide thoroughfares. He always paid great attention to the harmony of his buildings with the topography of their sites. When a work was approved, he first visited and investigated suitable sites; he then drew the plans and designed a suitable foundation system as well. Studying the sites of his masterpieces gives an insight into Sinan's talent in urban design.

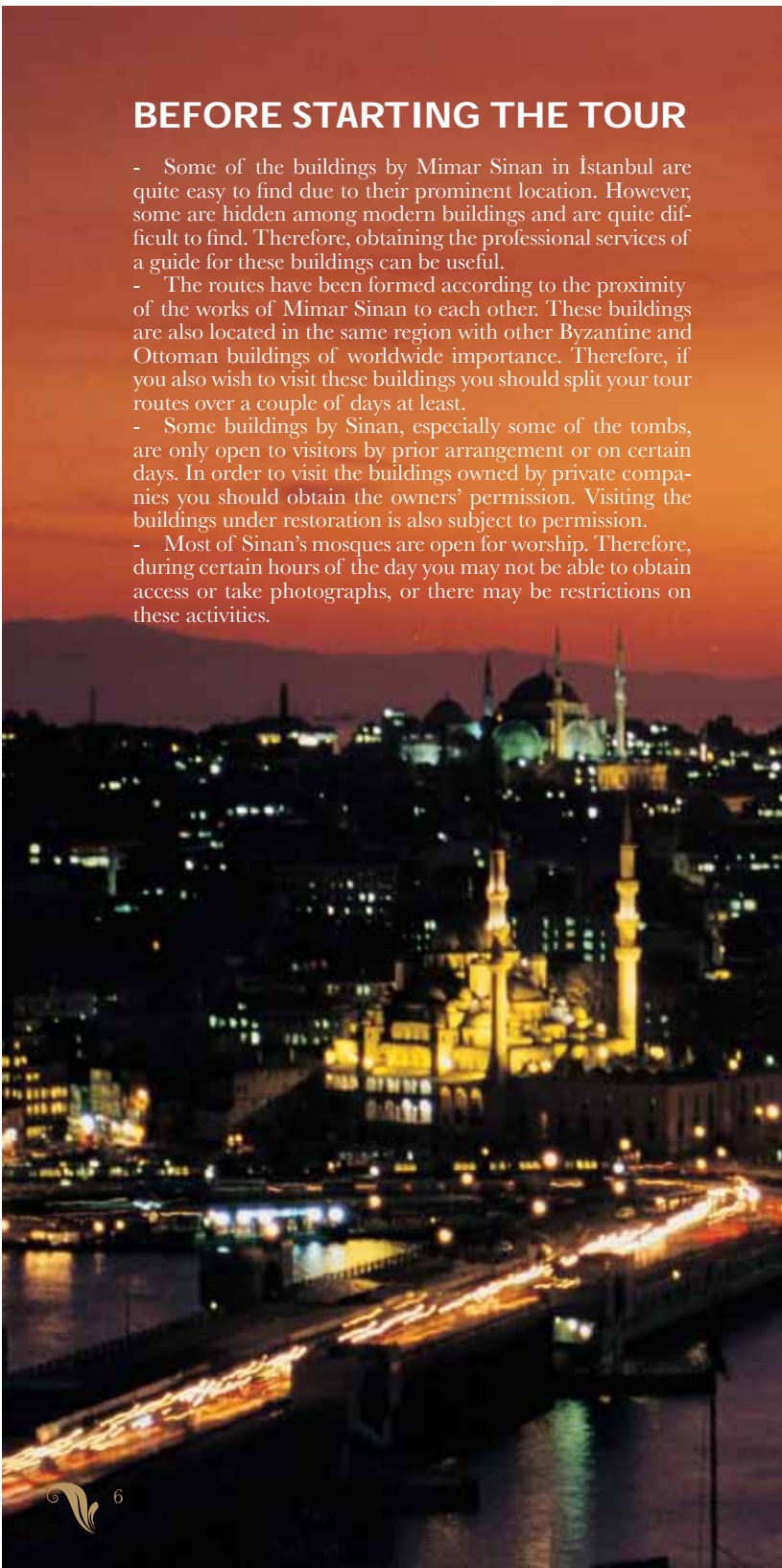
As you will appreciate, a trip to İstanbul to see the principal works of Mimar Sinan cannot be completed in one day. Therefore you should take several days exploring different routes through the historic streets with the breathtaking scenery of the İstanbul Strait. You may choose to take one of the routes where you can view the buildings on the same itinerary during a day trip. If you wish you might even attempt to follow more than one route in a day but this may be a bit tiring. However, remember that because of the beauty of Mimar Sinan's works you need to spend quite some time visiting them in order to fully appreciate.





## BEFORE STARTING THE TOUR

- Some of the buildings by Mimar Sinan in İstanbul are quite easy to find due to their prominent location. However, some are hidden among modern buildings and are quite difficult to find. Therefore, obtaining the professional services of a guide for these buildings can be useful.
- The routes have been formed according to the proximity of the works of Mimar Sinan to each other. These buildings are also located in the same region with other Byzantine and Ottoman buildings of worldwide importance. Therefore, if you also wish to visit these buildings you should split your tour routes over a couple of days at least.
- Some buildings by Sinan, especially some of the tombs, are only open to visitors by prior arrangement or on certain days. In order to visit the buildings owned by private companies you should obtain the owners' permission. Visiting the buildings under restoration is also subject to permission.
- Most of Sinan's mosques are open for worship. Therefore, during certain hours of the day you may not be able to obtain access or take photographs, or there may be restrictions on these activities.





*Eminönü*



## WHILE VISITING MİMAR SİNAN'S BUILDINGS

- Pay particular attention to the topography of the plot and the positioning of the buildings on the plots. One of the defining features of Sinan's genius in urban planning was his mastery in achieving harmony of the architecture with nature through selecting the sites and positioning his designs on those sites. Also pay attention to the entirety of his designs especially in his complexes where each building is in harmony with the natural topography.
- Pay attention to the pillars supporting the domes. Each of them was kept as slender as possible, while safely and securely bearing the weight of the dome, and through this mastery of civil engineering he achieved capacious interiors.
- Mimar Sinan paid keen attention to the skeleton system in his buildings and his prime concerns of symmetry and aesthetics are very characteristic. When visiting, check these trademark features of symmetry and aesthetics that can be observed even in his simplest buildings.
- Mimar Sinan was instrumental in developing the central dome and in all his buildings all other structural features have a role to play in supporting the central dome. The dome is the jewel in the crown in Sinan's masterpieces. In particular, pay attention to the central dome and its relationship to other structural features in the Süleymaniye Mosque, since it still enchants modern-day engineers and architects. The technique he used to provide spatial entirety by enveloping the whole interior space under a central dome is outstanding.
- One of the features special to the Mimar Sinan's designs, especially in the mosques dedicated to some of the Grand Viziers and the Grand Admirals, was providing the space for late congregants, as well as common courtyards surrounded by madrasah and mosque structures.
- The massive piles made from juniper timber were used in the foundations of buildings such as the Süleymaniye Mosque in order to absorb the impact of earth tremors as well as to provide ample opportunities for draining surface and sub-surface water.
- In Mimar Sinan's buildings each and every architectural feature has a function. You realise that none of them can be removed without damaging a function or architectural entity belonging to the building.
- Mimar Sinan never repeated himself in his building designs, always trying new variations and improvements. If you casually look at them you may think some of his buildings look alike. However, a closer and more careful inspection will lead you to realise the differences and improvements achieved even in the similar looking buildings.



*Sokollu Mehmet Pasha Mosque*



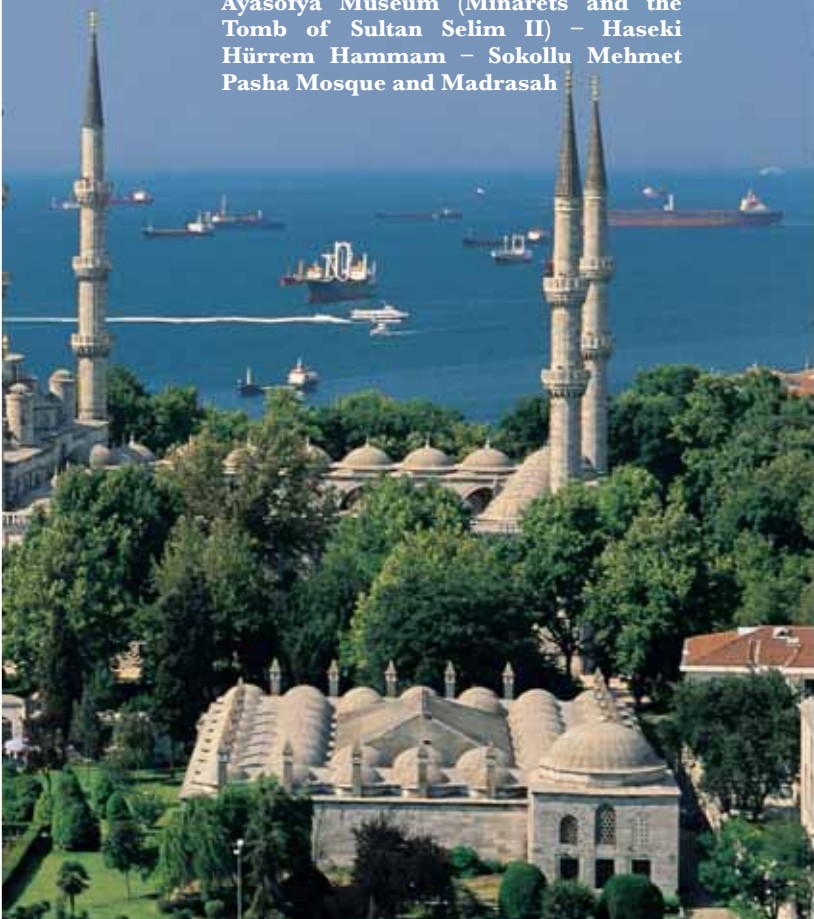




# 1. ÜSKÜDAR - SULTANAHMET TOURS

**ÜSKÜDAR:** Nurbanu Valide Atik Complex (devoted to Mother Sultan Nurbanu, the mother of Sultan Murat III) – Mimar Sinan Bazaar – Mihrimah Sultan Mosque and Complex (devoted to Mihrimah Sultan, the only daughter of Süleyman the Magnificent and Roxelane, Hürrem Sultan) – Şemsi Pasha Complex

**SULTANAHMET:** Topkapı Palace (the Chamber of Sultan Murat III - Palace kitchens) – Cafer Agha Madrasah – Ayasofya Museum (Minarets and the Tomb of Sultan Selim II) – Haseki Hürrem Hammam – Sokollu Mehmet Pasha Mosque and Madrasah





Nurbanu Valide Atik Complex

## Üsküdar

The Mimar Sinan excursion in Üsküdar is one of the shortest tours so it is possible to combine this with the Sultanahmet tour.

If you arrive in Üsküdar by boat, you will not fail to notice the works of Mimar Sinan since they were built very close to the pier, and all are within walking distance. However, if you choose to combine your excursion in Üsküdar with the tour of Sultanahmet, you should start by visiting the **Nurbanu Valide Atik Complex** (built between the years 1570 and 1583) (1A), which was built on one of the hills of Üsküdar and is a little further to visit than the other Sinan buildings in Üsküdar. As the hill is quite steep, we advise you to use public transport. The complex encompassing the mosque is one of the most extensive and grandest complexes in İstanbul. It was the Valide Sultan (Mother Sultan) Complex until the Mother Sultan Gülnuş commissioned the New Mother Sultan Complex in Üsküdar at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Since then it has been referred as the “Old Mother Sultan” and then “Atik Mother Sultan” Complex. To make use of the sloping terrain, the complex is sited on several terraced platforms. The grand design of the whole complex was made by Mimar Sinan and it comprised a *madrasah* (school of religious studies) a *tekke* (ceremonial building of worship) a *sübyan mektebi* (primary school),





a *dar-ül hadis* (Hadith School), a *dar-ül kurra* (school for learning the Quran), *imaret* (public kitchens), a *darüßsifa* (hospital) and a *hammam* (public bathhouse). In modern times the buildings of the complex have become separated by streets.

The central building of the complex is the mosque with its marble carved *minber* (the imam's pulpit for delivering sermons in the mosque) and *mihrab* (the niche in the wall indicating the qibla, the direction of Kaaba in Mecca) decorated with hand-painted tiles; the hand-painted decoration of the dome and the mother-of-pearl inlaid gates are also exquisite examples to enjoy. The *dar-ül kurra* stands before you when you leave the mosque. Although it is not allowed to visit this building, a glance from the outside still reveals its features. Across from the northern entrance of the mosque is the area which is used as the Centre of Decorative Arts. It was once the *khankah*, the buildings for the dervish lodge containing the cells of the dervishes. Today it is used for the production and exhibition of traditional decorative arts and also for giving education in this field. It is also used for cultural events and there is a gift shop where you can buy items of traditional arts such as *hat* (calligraphy), *tezhip* (gilding and illuminating), and *ebru* (marbling).



*Mihrimah Sultan Mosque*

To the west of these buildings, on a lower level, are the *darüşşifa* and public kitchens. They have been used for many different purposes throughout their history, including being used as a prison; therefore they have lost their original characters. As the buildings are now part of the University of Marmara, you need to ask for permission to visit and to take photographs.

From these buildings you can take a short walk down the slope to Quay Square to visit several more of the buildings of Mimar Sinan which are close to one another. The first to visit is the **Mihrimah Sultan Mosque** (built between the years 1547 and 1548) **(1B)**. It is also known as the Quay Mosque since it is very close to the quayside. Mihrimah Sultan was the beloved daughter of Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent. This mosque is one of the earliest examples of the creative genius of Mimar Sinan. He had already built Şehzade (Prince) Mosque, where he built the main dome being supported by four half-domes. However, in the design of this mosque he built the main dome being supported by three semi-domes. He used this plan only in this building. The façade facing the İstanbul Strait is another feature adding to the splendour of the building. The ablution fountain of the mosque was set in the centre of the front courtyard and it was merged structurally with the portico for the late congregants. The ablution fountain is one of the most beautiful examples in İstanbul. The minber of the mosque with its intricate marquetry is also worth a closer look.

If you walk in a southerly direction from this building you will shortly reach another work of Mimar Sinan. **Çifte Hammam** (double hammam), which is known as the **Mimar Sinan Bazaar (1C)** today was commissioned by Nurbanu Sultan, the mother of Sultan Murat III. It was the last public bathhouse built by Mimar Sinan. For many years it served as the public bathhouse in the Üsküdar marketplace, and since its closure the rooms in its interior have been converted to serve as shops.



*Mimar Sinan Bazaar*



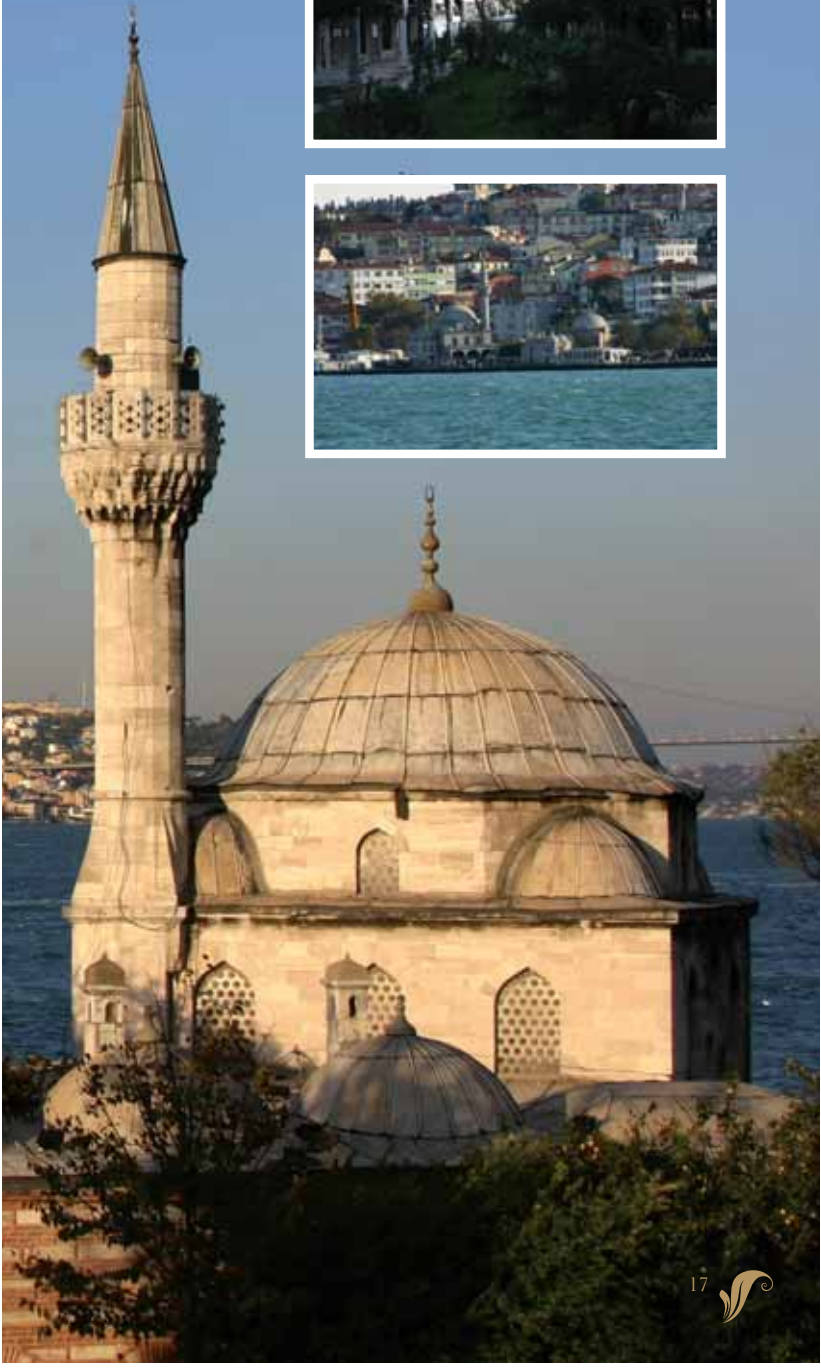
The mosques of Mimar Sinan in Üsküdar are the only buildings that he positioned so close to the sea. The best example of this is the **Şemsi Pasha Complex (1D)**, which is on the southern part of the quay. The mosque is so close to the sea that waves literally break over the walls and it is the only one where this happens. It is also one of the best examples of the buildings which are in harmony with nature. The small sizes of the mosque and the madrasah are the results of Mimar Sinan's architectural ingenuity. Although the lay of the terrain allowed only for a small plot, the building was masterfully built along the shore. In each of Sinan's designs the positioning of the building within its plot has been his greatest strength. In this mosque the foundations were laid over the sea so that the seascape merged with the façade of the mosque.

From the vantage point of the courtyard of the mosque there is a magnificent view over the Strait and the historic peninsula, which mere words cannot describe – especially during sunset. So, when you have finished your excursion we recommend that you spare a moment to enjoy this view.

You can travel from Üsküdar to Eminönü by boat. If you sit in the open air section of the boat, you can also enjoy the memorable views during the ride. Kız Kulesi (Leander's Tower), built on a rocky outcrop in the middle of the İstanbul Strait, lends itself to the picturesque scene of İstanbul. The beautiful historic houses set on the ridge of Salacak for a moment make you forget that you are in the footsteps of Mimar Sinan.



*Şemsi Pasha Complex*





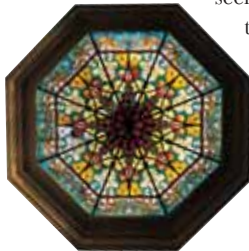
### Sultanahmet

Sultanahmet is one of the prime locations in İstanbul for visitors. As the centre of the Byzantine Empire, the historic peninsula is full of buildings to visit that span two millennia. In this historic peninsula which hosted many momentous events and glorious festivities in the past, you can see the most prominent examples of Sinan's buildings and of works that have taken important place in the history of world architecture.

The first stop on the tour of Sultanahmet is the **Topkapı Palace (1E)**. The palace was used by the Ottoman Sultans as their seat of power as well as their residence and every corner is full of surprises and hidden splendours. The building by Mimar Sinan contributing to the splendour of Topkapı is the **Chamber of Sultan Murat III**, which is the only palace construction that the great architect undertook. The harem quarters at Topkapı Palace are a group of buildings that were continually added to by the Sultans. When Sultan Murat III decided to build a chamber for himself, his preference was to commission Mimar Sinan. The chamber, decorated with the best İznik tiles, is of historic importance, with Sinan's finesse in creating grandiose buildings being very strikingly translated into this small, private construction. The same mastery can be seen in the **kitchen buildings** with their impressive chimneys reflecting

the trend for high smokestacks.

Mimar Sinan oversaw the repair of the kitchen section of the palace during the 15<sup>th</sup> century and replanned the buildings according to the needs of the day.







*Cafer Agha Madrasah*





When you have finished your tour of the Topkapı Palace you may prefer to visit other buildings, so we recommend that you choose to walk from one building to another in order to fully enjoy the riches of this historic peninsula. You will find that Sinan's buildings are all very close by.

The first stop before reaching the monumental **Ayasofya Museum** is the **Cafer Agha Madrasah** (1559) (1F) situated on the Caferiye Street. The original features of the building have largely remained to the present day and it is currently used as a centre for handicrafts. So when you visit this building you will have the chance to watch the making of traditional Turkish handicrafts, look at the works of art on display, or enjoy refreshments at the cosy courtyard café.

Mimar Sinan's contribution to İstanbul was not limited to his designs and buildings. He also carried out important repair and renovation works that resulted in many older masterpieces still standing today. Our next stop **Ayasofya Museum** (1G) is one of them and it is among the most important symbols of İstanbul. The most important renovation work that Sinan completed here involved the dome and he also added massive buttresses to support the walls and two minarets to the northern façade. His efforts to ensure that the minarets were in harmony with the rest of the building not only reflect his respect for the grand old building but also his mastery. In order to achieve this harmony he reinterpreted the classical ratios and details of a minaret.





The **Tomb of Sultan Selim II** (1577), a monumental building constructed in the courtyard of Ayasofya, is also a work of Mimar Sinan. The Ottoman Sultans preferred to be buried in the courtyards of the mosques built for their own glory. However, Sultan Selim II built his royal mosque in Edirne, and as he had commissioned major work at Ayasofya he chose its courtyard as the site for his tomb. There are forty-two sarcophagi including the one of Nurbanu Sultan, the wife of Sultan Selim II.

Walking from Ayasofya Museum to the Sultan Ahmet Mosque you can visit the **Haseki Hürrem Hammam** (1556-1557) **(IH)**, which stands between these two glorious buildings. It is one of the monumental double hammams of İstanbul that has maintained its unique features. It was devoted to Hürrem Sultan, the wife of Süleyman the Magnificent, and was built by Mimar Sinan.

When you leave the hammam, walk along the Atmeydanı (the ancient Hippodrome). The Sultan Ahmet Mosque (the Blue Mosque) on your left was not built by Mimar Sinan but one of his apprentices, Sedefkar Mehmet Agha. Considering the fact that yet another apprentice of Mimar Sinan, Mehmet İsa Effendi, built the Taj Mahal in India, you can appreciate how influential he was in shaping the world architecture and how his legacy spread through the ages.

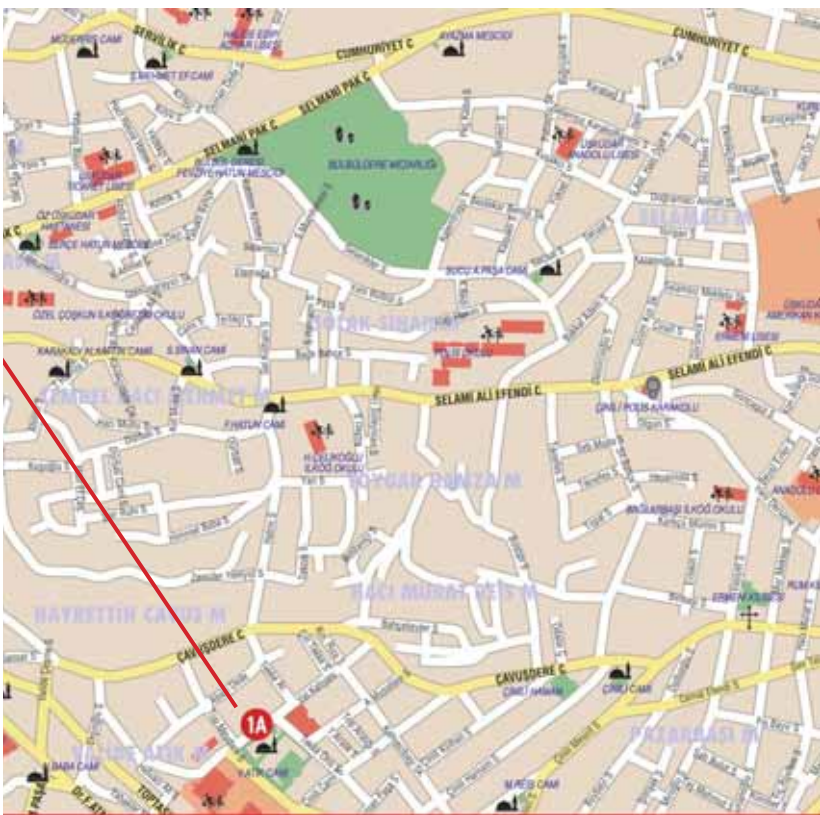
At the end of the Atmeydanı the road slopes down to the shore. At the Kadirga Sokak you come across the mosque built by Sinan for the Grand Vizier **Sokollu Mehmet Pasha (II)**. Despite its smaller scale, its interior is one of the most striking examples of Mimar Sinan's work, not only in İstanbul but throughout all of his work. With its world-renowned İznik tile decorations and panelling, as well as its intricate mihrab, the mosque is the last stop of the Mimar Sinan tour in Sultanahmet.

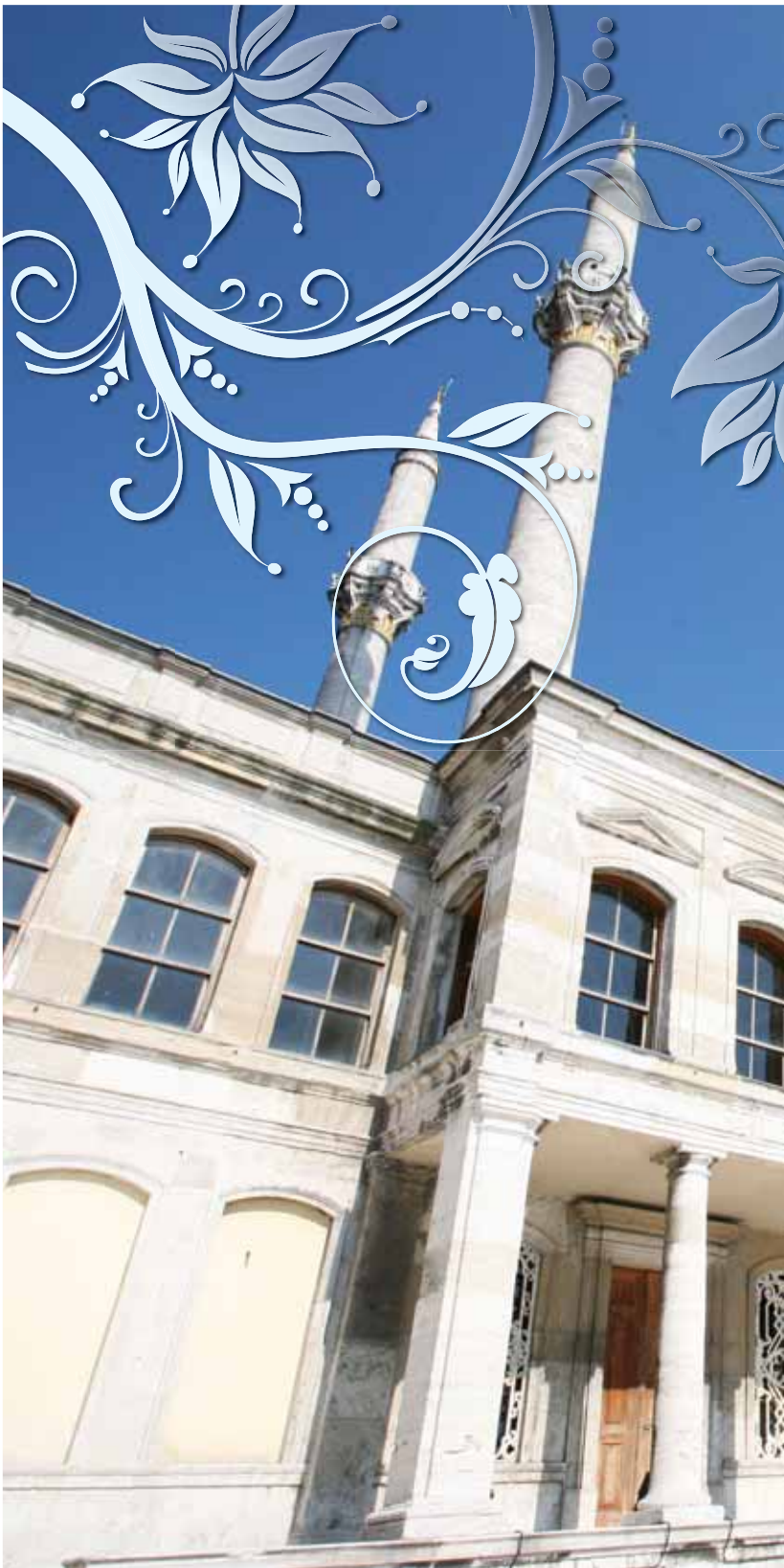


*Haseki Hürrem Hamamı*











## 2. KARAKÖY-TOPHANE- BEŞİKTAŞ - ORTAKÖY TOURS

**Sokollu Mehmet Pasha Mosque – Rüstem Pasha Caravanserai – Kılıç Ali Pasha Mosque and Complex – Şehzade Cihangir Mosque – Molla Çelebi (Fındıklı) Mosque – Yahya Effendi Tomb – Tomb of Barbaros Hayrettin Pasha – Sinan Pasha Mosque – Hüsrev Kethüda Hammam**

The tour starts at the Atatürk Bridge that connects Galata to the historic peninsula and proceeds along the shores of the Golden Horn (Haliç) and the İstanbul Strait, with magnificent views of the the Strait and the Boğaziçi Bridge, uniting two continents.







*Sokollu Mehmet Pasha Mosque*



The first building by Mimar Sinan that we come across is the **Sokollu Mehmet Pasha Mosque** (also known as the **Azapkapi Mosque** due to the name of the district) (2A). Mimar Sinan built several complexes in various parts of Istanbul for this famous Grand Vizier of the period. The mosque was originally built as part of a complex. However, the other buildings in the complex have long gone, so today the mosque stands on its own. The interior layout is very similar to the Selimiye Mosque, albeit on a smaller scale. One of the interesting aspects of the mosque is the location of its minaret, which is separate from the building and is connected to the portico via a bridge. The carved grilles of the portal and windows as well as two staircases leading to the enclosed portico reflect the fine quality of the marble carving minber which is also one of the must see parts of the mosque. The detached minaret is a feature that Mimar Sinan never used again. The Sokollu Mehmet Pasha Hammam is situated opposite the mosque; alas, the features from Mimar Sinan's period have been lost.





The buildings by Mimar Sinan that are visited on this tour are quite close to the shore so they are easy to find. The exception is the **Rüstem Pasha Caravanserai** (1544) (2B), also known as Kurşunlu Han, situated in the middle of Thursday Market and surrounded by several shops and therefore quite difficult to find. The rooms are presently used as shops and for storage.

If we proceed along the route enjoying the beauty of the İstanbul Strait, we pass the Karaköy Boat Pier and on the Meclisi Mebusan Street we reach the neighbourhood of Tophane.

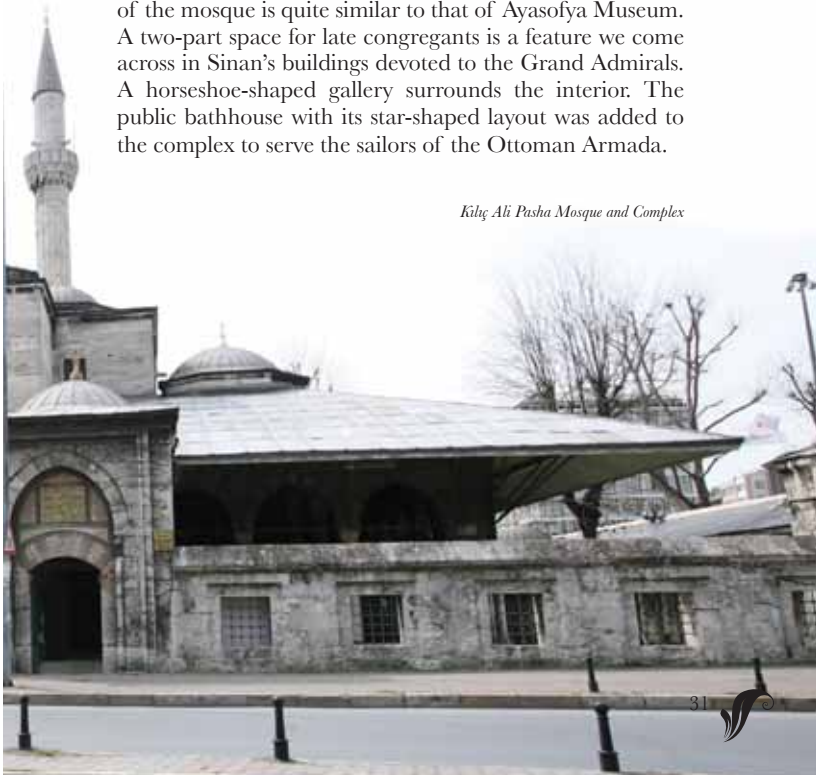






There you are greeted by the grand architecture of the **Kılıç Ali Pasha Mosque and Complex** (1580-1587) (2C). This monumental building was built for one of the Grand Admirals of the Ottoman Armada and is the first of several buildings on the route devoted to the Grand Admirals. The complex was commissioned by Kılıç Ali Pasha. However, only the mosque and the public bathhouse have survived. The Tomb of Kılıç Ali Pasha was positioned at the seaward corner of the mosque so that he could find eternal rest in the sound of waves and the smell of the sea that had accompanied him during his years at sea. The plan of the mosque is quite similar to that of Ayasofya Museum. A two-part space for late congregants is a feature we come across in Sinan's buildings devoted to the Grand Admirals. A horseshoe-shaped gallery surrounds the interior. The public bathhouse with its star-shaped layout was added to the complex to serve the sailors of the Ottoman Armada.

*Kılıç Ali Pasha Mosque and Complex*





Frequent fires in İstanbul have caused extensive damage to some of Sinan's buildings. **Şehzade Cihangir Mosque (2D)**, that has suffered six fires, is one of the unluckiest. The mosque has lost almost all of its architectural features from Sinan's period. However, it is worth a quick visit as it is situated on Cihangir Yokuşu Street, which is on the route of the tour. While the building has lost much of its charm, the courtyard has the best views over the İstanbul Strait, including from Ayasofya and Sultanahmet to the Prince Islands and Leander's Tower.

The next Sinan building on the route is the **Molla Çelebi (Fındıklı) Mosque (1586) (2E)**. Compared to other monumental buildings by Mimar Sinan, this mosque is quite small but is fascinating nevertheless since it was built alongside the İstanbul Strait. It is one of the hexagonally shaped mosques designed by Mimar Sinan and was commissioned by the *kadı* (the judge) of İstanbul, Mehmet Vusuli Effendi.



*Molla Çelebi (Fındıklı) Mosque*





*Tomb of Barbaros Hayrettin Pasha*



The next Sinan building on the route does require some walking. However, the views are exceptional. The route passes by the Dolmabahçe Palace situated along the shore of the İstanbul Strait and reaches two of the Sinan's buildings situated close by in Beşiktaş district. These buildings commemorate two famous names from the Ottoman navy.

The first of these buildings is the **Tomb of Barbaros Hayrettin Pasha** (1541) (2F), situated near the Naval Museum. Mimar Sinan built the final resting places for many important personages from the Ottoman Empire. The Tomb of Barbaros Hayrettin Pasha is one the best examples. The first Grand Admiral of the Ottoman navy, Barbaros Hayrettin Pasha, was renowned for his victory at the Battle of Preveza. A befitting tomb for such a renowned mariner should indeed be placed right next to the sea with the everlasting sound of waves and a magnificent seascape. The tradition was that the grand fleet leaving from the port of İstanbul for a campaign would salute as they passed the tomb. The inside of the tomb is open to visitors only two days a year, 4<sup>th</sup> April and 1<sup>st</sup> July.

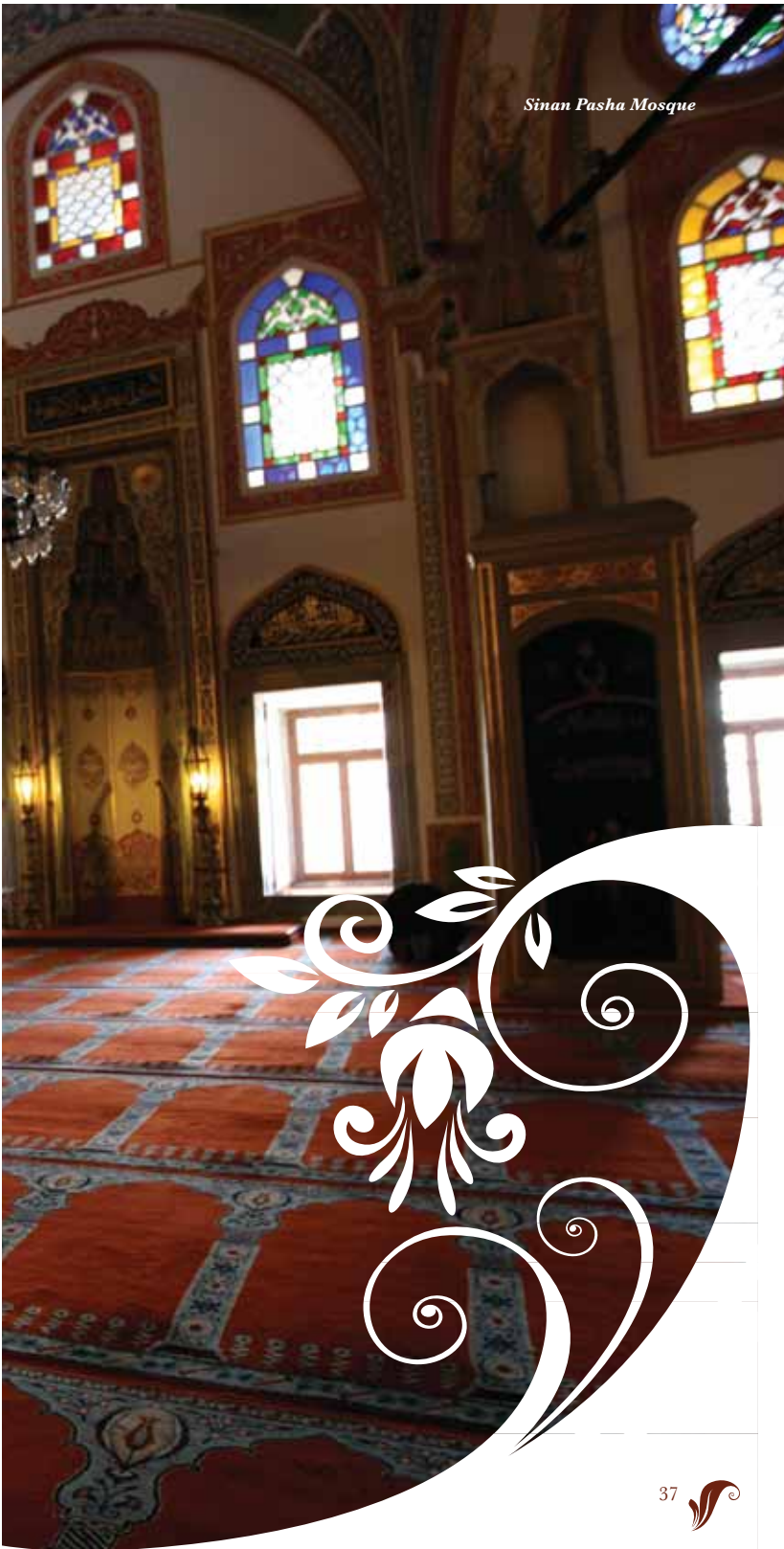




Grand Admiral Sinan Pasha was another important person from the Ottoman navy. The mosque bearing his name was also built by Mimar Sinan. This **Sinan Pasha Mosque** (1555-1556) (2G) is opposite the Tomb of Barbaros Hayrettin Pasha. The Grand Fleet of the Ottoman navy traditionally performed a prayer (*namaz*) at the mosque after saluting the Tomb of Barbaros Hayrettin Pasha before setting sail for a campaign. Mimar Sinan's design incorporated the plan of the Üç Şerefeli Mosque (The Mosque with Three Minaret Balconies) in Edirne. The arabesque painted ceilings and walls of the interior and the twin spaces for late congregants are the distinguishing features. The madrasah which shares its courtyard with the mosque was also built by Mimar Sinan.



*Sinan Pasha Mosque*





*Tomb of Yahya Effendi*



*Hüsrev Kethüda Hamman*

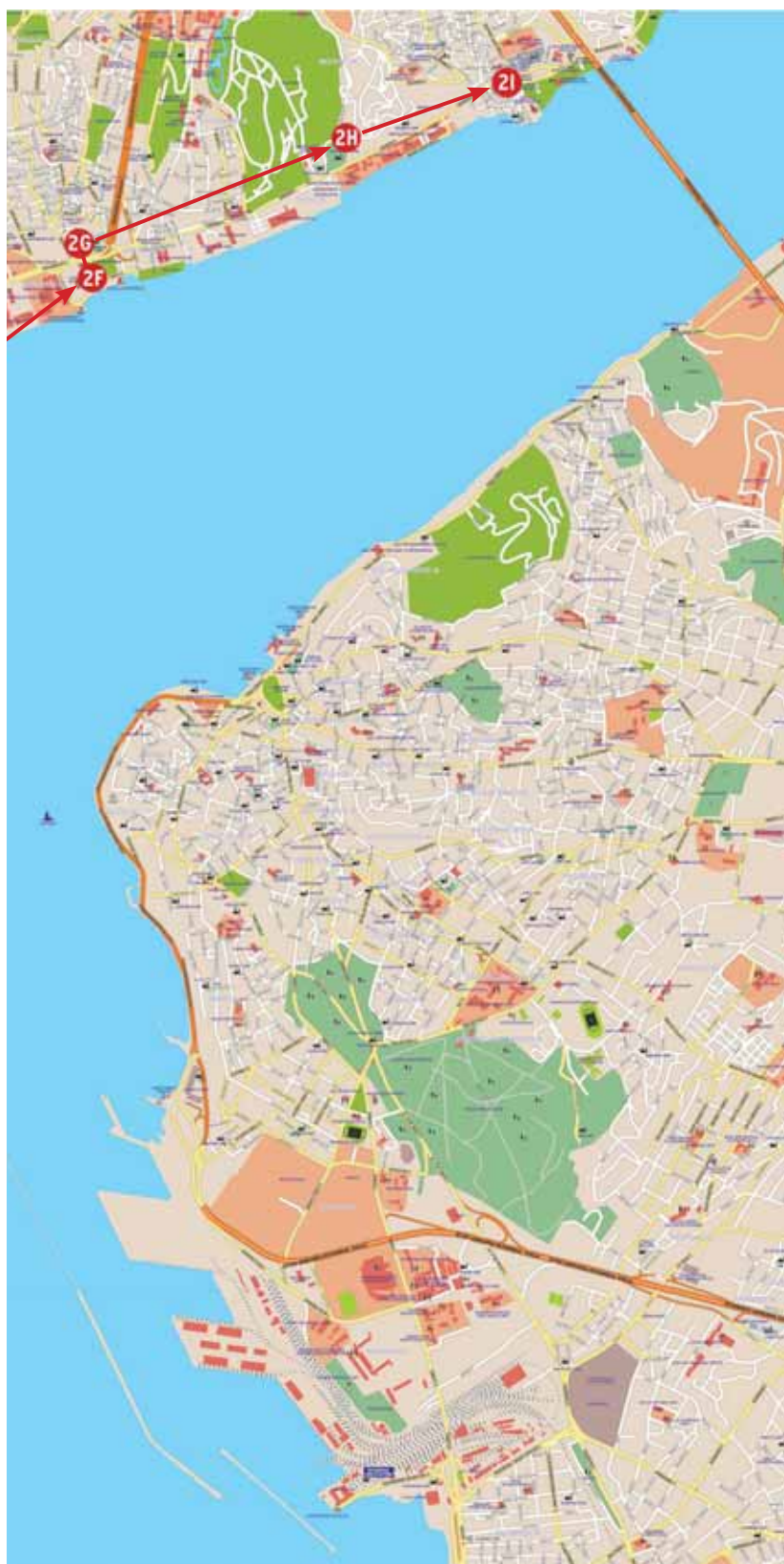
You then proceed from Beşiktaş along the Çırağan Street, a tree-lined boulevard leading to the Yıldız Park situated on the left hand side of the road. The narrow street leading up the hill is Yahya Effendi Street and here you can find the **Tomb of Yahya Effendi (2H)** also built by Mimar Sinan. Yahya Effendi's mother was a wet-nurse for Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent. His tomb which is situated in the centre of a graveyard is frequently visited by mariners since he is believed to be the guardian of the Strait. As it has been repaired several times over its history it has lost many of its architectural features from Sinan's period. However, it is worth a visit to listen to the stories about the miracles of Yahya Effendi. As reaching the graveyard requires quite a climb it is one of the least accessible of all the sites. However, its unique hilltop position with its view over the İstanbul Strait is worth the effort. If you have limited time, you could perhaps postpone this visit together with the further exploration of Yıldız Park, one of the large green parks in İstanbul.

From here you can either travel by car or walk along the Muallim Naci Street, lying alongside the İstanbul Strait, to reach the Ortaköy Neighbourhood. At the junction of Dereboyu and Muallim Naci streets you find the **Hüsrev Kethüda Hammam (2I)**. As it has been converted to serve as a bar during the evenings it is closed to visitors during the day and gaining access is only possible by prior arrangement. However, you can refresh yourself at this place commemorating Mimar Sinan. You can also choose to enjoy a drink or a snack at one of the cafés around Ortaköy Mosque, adorned with the beautiful scenery and views over the Boğaziçi Bridge at sunset.









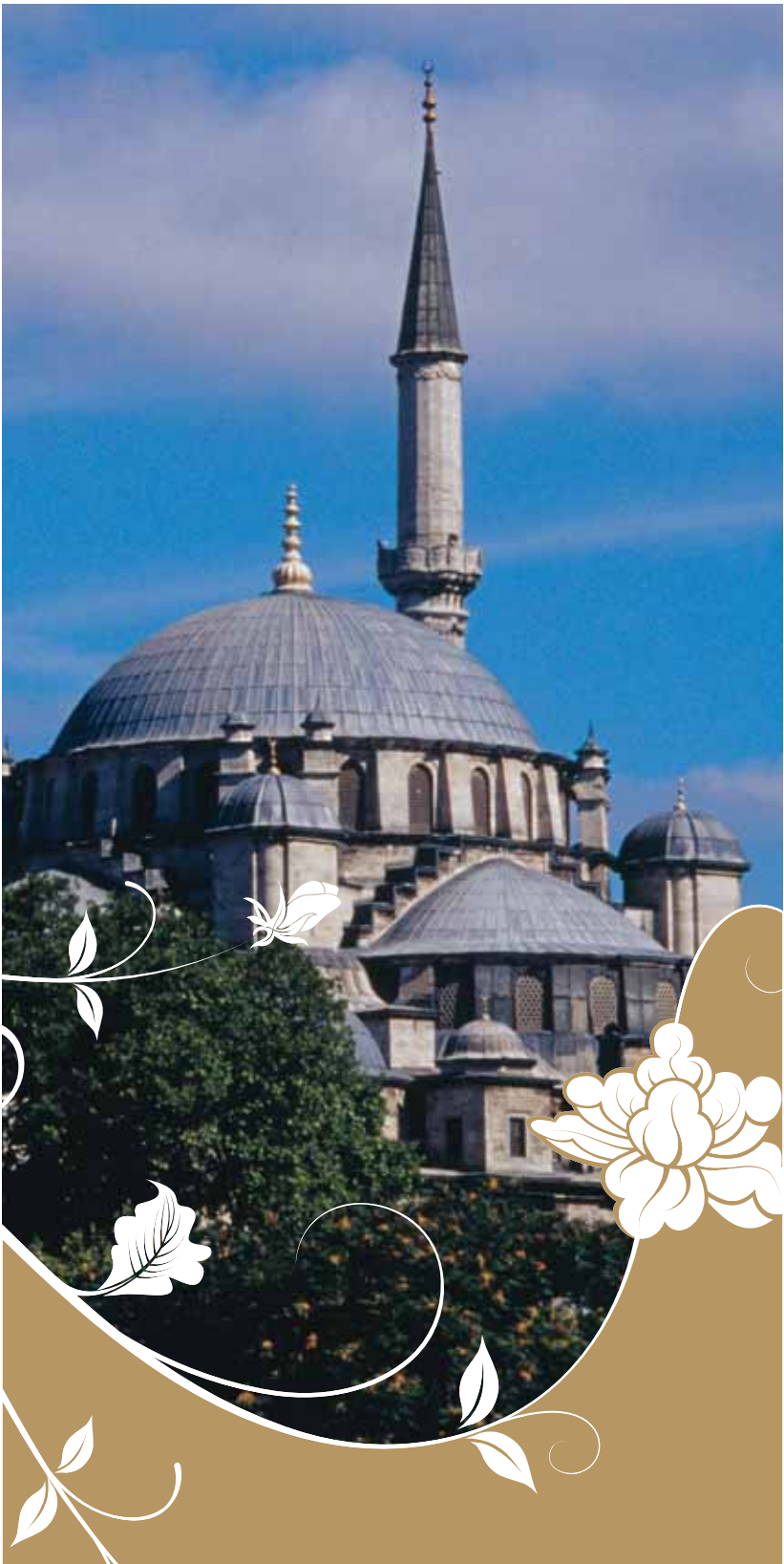
## 3. FATİH - EYÜP TOURS

**FATİH:** Nişancı Mehmet Pasha Mosque – Mesih Mehmet Pasha Mosque – Semiz Ali Pasha Madrasah – Mimrimah Sultan Mosque

**EYÜP:** The Masjid of Defterdar Mahmut Çelebi - Zal Mahmut Pasha Complex – The Tomb of Sokollu Mehmet Pasha– The Tomb of Siyavuş Pasha – The Tomb of Pertev Pasha – The Tomb of Ayas Pasha











*Nişancı  
Mehmet Pasha Mosque*

### **Fatih**

We start our tour in Fatih in the Çarşamba Neighbourhood. As the street layout is quite complex and Mimar Sinan's buildings are often hidden by modern buildings, you may need the assistance of an expert guide. First stop is the **Nişancı Mehmet Pasha Mosque** (1584-1587) **(3A)**. *Nişancı* was the Chief Clerk at the Ottoman Court, whose primary function was to inscribe the imperial monogram (*tuğra*) of the Sultan on the imperial documents. It is believed that the design and construction were commenced under Mimar Sinan. However, it was completed by his apprentices. The *tuğra* of Sultan Murat III, which was designed by Nişancı Mehmet Pasha, can be seen on the main portal of the mosque. The Tomb of Nişancı Mehmet Paşa is in the courtyard adjacent to the mosque. The minber of the mosque is a very good example of stone carving.

**Mesih Mehmet Pasha Mosque** (1585) **(3B)**, also known as **Mesih Ali Pasha Mosque**, is situated at the junction of Akşemsettin and Fevzipasha streets. The most striking feature of the mosque is that the place normally occupied by *şadırvan*, the ablution fountain, is taken up by the tomb, which is very rare in Ottoman architecture. Mesih Mehmet Pasha, who was the Grand Vizier of Sultan Murat III, commissioned the mosque in 1585, died in 1592 and was buried in the tomb. As the plot of land on which the mosque was built was steeply inclined, the mosque was built over a raised platform and to the ground floor of the west façade a range of shops was placed. The construction of this mosque was again believed to be started by Mimar Sinan and completed by his apprentices.

*Mesih Ali Pasha Mosque*





Near the Stadium of Karag m r k stood the **Semiz Ali Pasha Madrasah** (1558) (3C), currently the Fatih Polyclinic, and the next stop on our tour of Mimar Sinan's works. Generally, madrasahs were built as part of a complex. However, this one was designed and built as a single independent entity. Due to fire and earthquake damage it has lost most of its unique characteristics created by Mimar Sinan.





*Mihrimah Sultan Mosque*

If you walk along the Fevzipaşa Street that passes in front of the madrasah, you will reach the next stop. The **Mihrimah Sultan Mosque** (1562-1565) (3D) is situated next to the city walls at Edirnekapı. Its impressive dome rising to the sky attracts your attention from far away. It shares a common courtyard with its madrasah and was built over a raised platform. The arches supporting the dome are full of windows that provide ample light for the interior. You must also take a closer look at the marble minber as well as the window and door frames, which are inlaid with mother-of-pearl and ivory on wood reflecting the glory of Sinan's masterpieces. The Tomb of Güzel (Handsome) Ahmet Pasha, son-in-law of Mihrimah Sultan, situated in the grounds of the complex, was also designed and built by Mimar Sinan as was the Mihrimah Sultan Hammam. However, the hammam has lost its unique features due to extensive repairs.



*Masjed of Deftedar Mahmut Çelebi*





### **Eyüp**

After visiting this complex, you cross the city walls and leave the city's historic peninsula to proceed towards Eyüp. Although you can walk here we advise you to use public transport.

Eyüp, the district of İstanbul famous for its tombs and historical graveyards, is considered as a holy place. Here, the buildings by Mimar Sinan follow a general theme in that they mainly consist of tombs. This holy part at the Empire's heart was frequently visited by the Ottoman Sultans and many significant personages who also wished their tombs built here. Mimar Sinan provided them with buildings designed with elegance and of eternal beauty. Besides, some of his complexes and mosques in the vicinity of Eyüp can be easily visited during this tour.

The **Masjid of Defterdar Mahmut Çelebi** (1541) (3E) is the first stop on our tour of Eyüp. The *defterdar* was the title equivalent to Chancellor of the Exchequer in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and Mahmut Çelebi was also an influential calligrapher of his time, his skills being reflected on the inscriptions above the entrance portal. The masjid is right across from the *Feshane* (an old textile factory along the shore of the Golden Horn which is nowadays used as an entertainment centre during the festivities of Ramadan) and is part of the complex. The other buildings of the complex have long since disappeared although the masjid has been partially renovated. In every religious building there is a part symbolising the religion. The symbol of Islam is the crescent moon which is placed over the minaret of the mosques. However, over the minaret of this mosque, a pen and an inkpot were placed to give the message that literacy is the best way of enlightenment and modernisation. These pen and inkpot which were damaged by earthquakes have been replaced again over the minaret at an early date.



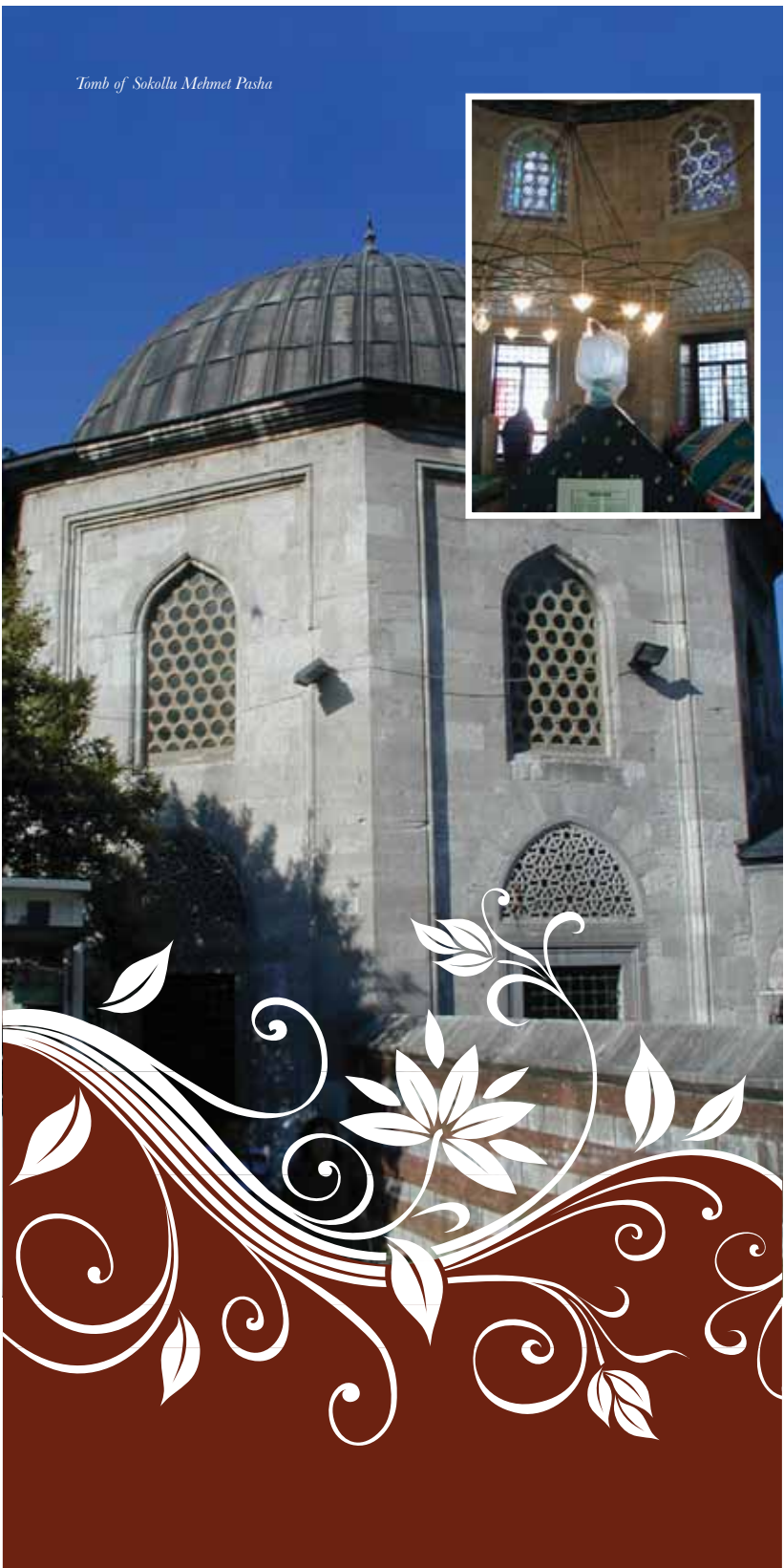
If you continue walking west on the same street you will come to the **Zal Mahmut Pasha Complex (3F)**, which has high-rise façades so that it is almost impossible to see the dome from street level. The complex has twin madrasahs and the upper madrasah and the mosque share the same courtyard. In order to follow the design of the streets the street façade was built without a portico. The mosque has one of the most ornamental façades of all of Mimar Sinan's buildings built in 1540. Zal Mahmut Pasha and his beloved wife, Şah Sultan, who were never apart, died within a short time of one another and their tombs were built close to each other. While all the other daughters of Sultan Selim II were buried in the family tomb in the courtyard of Ayasofya, these two lovers were buried close by so that they were not even separated by death. So we recommend that you pay a visit to both tombs just to honour their story. The rooms of the madrasah are used for handicraft workshops where the renowned wooden Eyüp toys are made. The Tomb of Şah Sultan which is outside the boundaries of the mosque serves as the premises for the Association for the Preservation of Old Buildings.







*Tomb of Sokollu Mehmet Pasha*





Sokollu Mehmet Pasha, the famous Grand Vizier of the Ottoman Empire, commissioned several buildings to Mimar Sinan. His own tomb, the **Tomb of Sokollu Mehmet Pasha (3G)**, is the first tomb that we visit in Eyüp built by Mimar Sinan. It is part of the complex bearing his name and situated next to the Eyüp Sultan Mosque which is considered as the most sacred part of the area. The outward appearance of the tomb was left very plain as request by Mehmet Pasha in his will. There are also headstones for the children of Mehmet Pasha in the tomb. Like many other tombs it is closed to visitors except on certain dates. The other buildings by Sinan which are part of the complex are the dar-ül kurra commissioned by Mehmet Pasha for his wife, İsmihan Sultan, and the madrasah, currently a polyclinic.

After the Sokollu Mehmet Pasha Complex, the next stop is the **Tomb of Siyavuş Pasha (3H)**, just across the street. Although he commissioned the tomb for his children, he too was buried there. While Mimar Sinan was building the tomb, he had a long, drawn-out argument with the Grand Vizier Siyavuş Pasha about who would be promoted to the post of Chief Royal Architect after his demise.



*Tomb of Siyavuş Pasha*









*Tomb of Pertev Pasha*

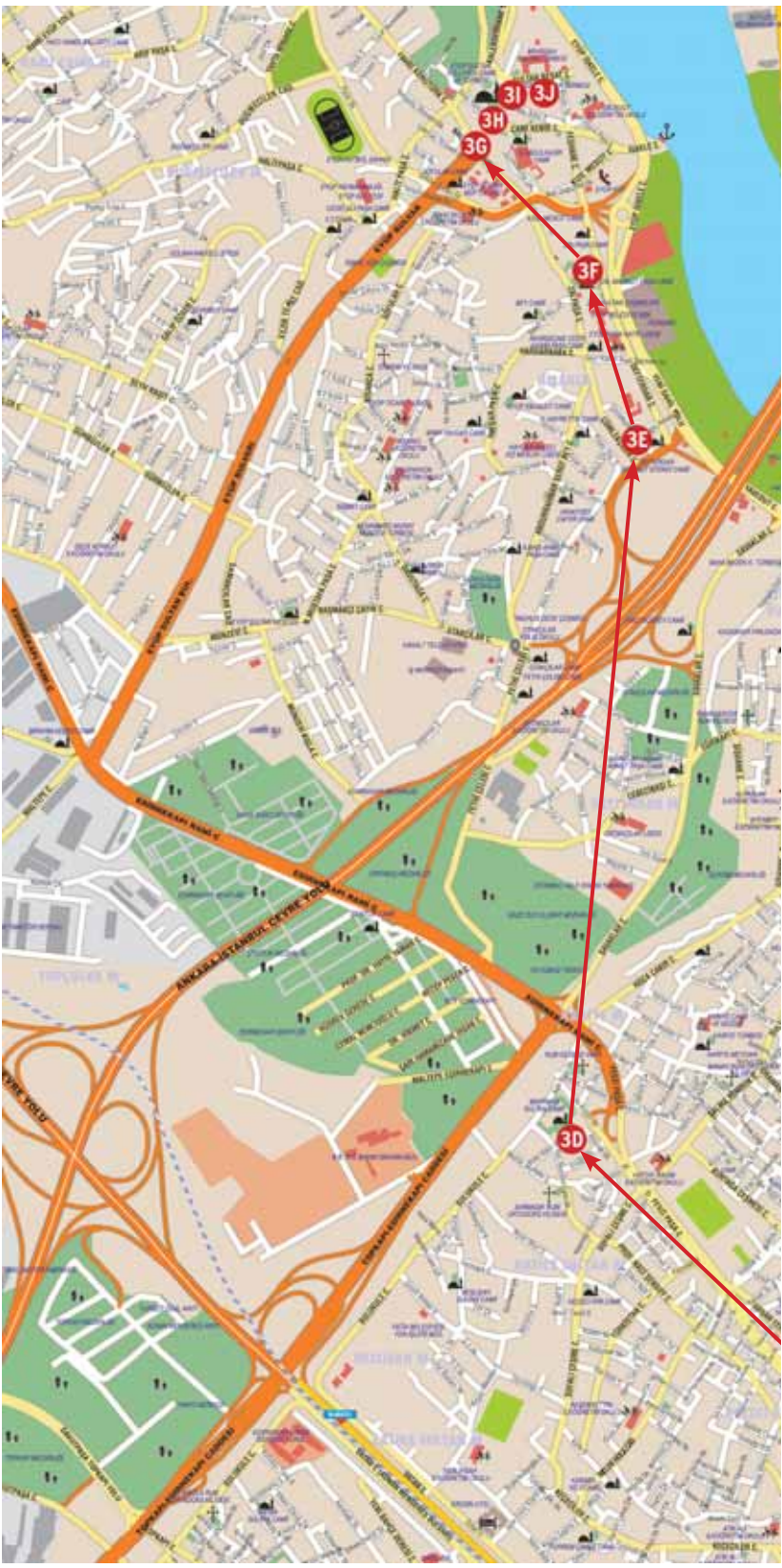
Next to the Eyüp Sultan Mosque, on the Beybaba Street, stand two tombs that were built by Mimar Sinan. The first is the **Tomb of Pertev Pasha** (1574) (31). Unfortunately it is now only a ruin, the dome and other upper structures have been demolished. The graves in the tomb remained unidentified to date.

On the same street to the left of the entrance portal of Eyüp Sultan Mosque stands the **Tomb of Ayas Pasha** (3J), which is distinguished by its baldachin-style dome canopy supported by slender columns. This tomb is also not in good condition. It was built very plainly as was Sinan's own tomb. It is important as it was one of the first buildings by Mimar Sinan. The sarcophagus of Ayas Pasha stands under the canopy. There are neatly placed rows of graves around the tomb.



*Tomb of Ayas Pasha*





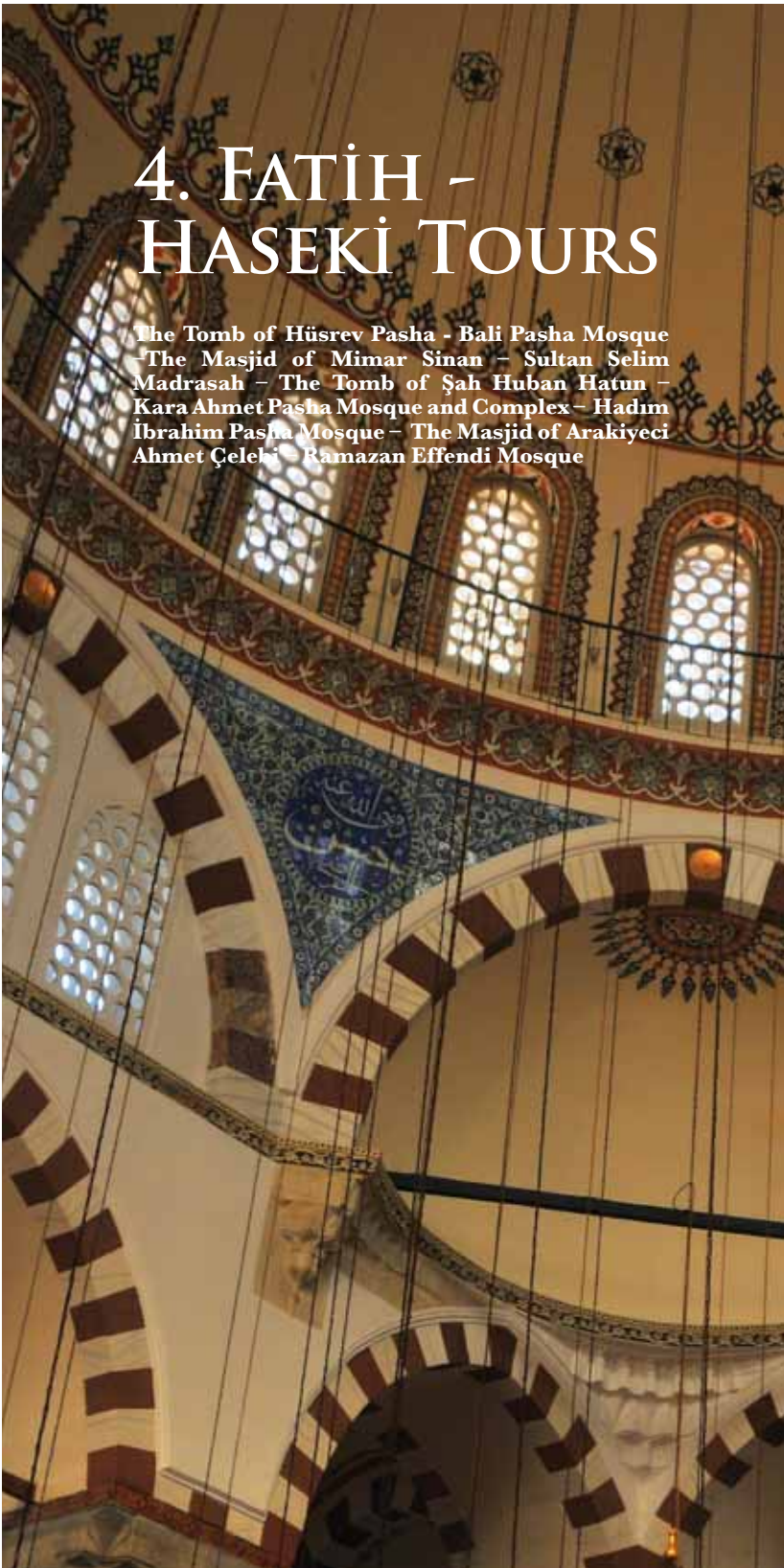


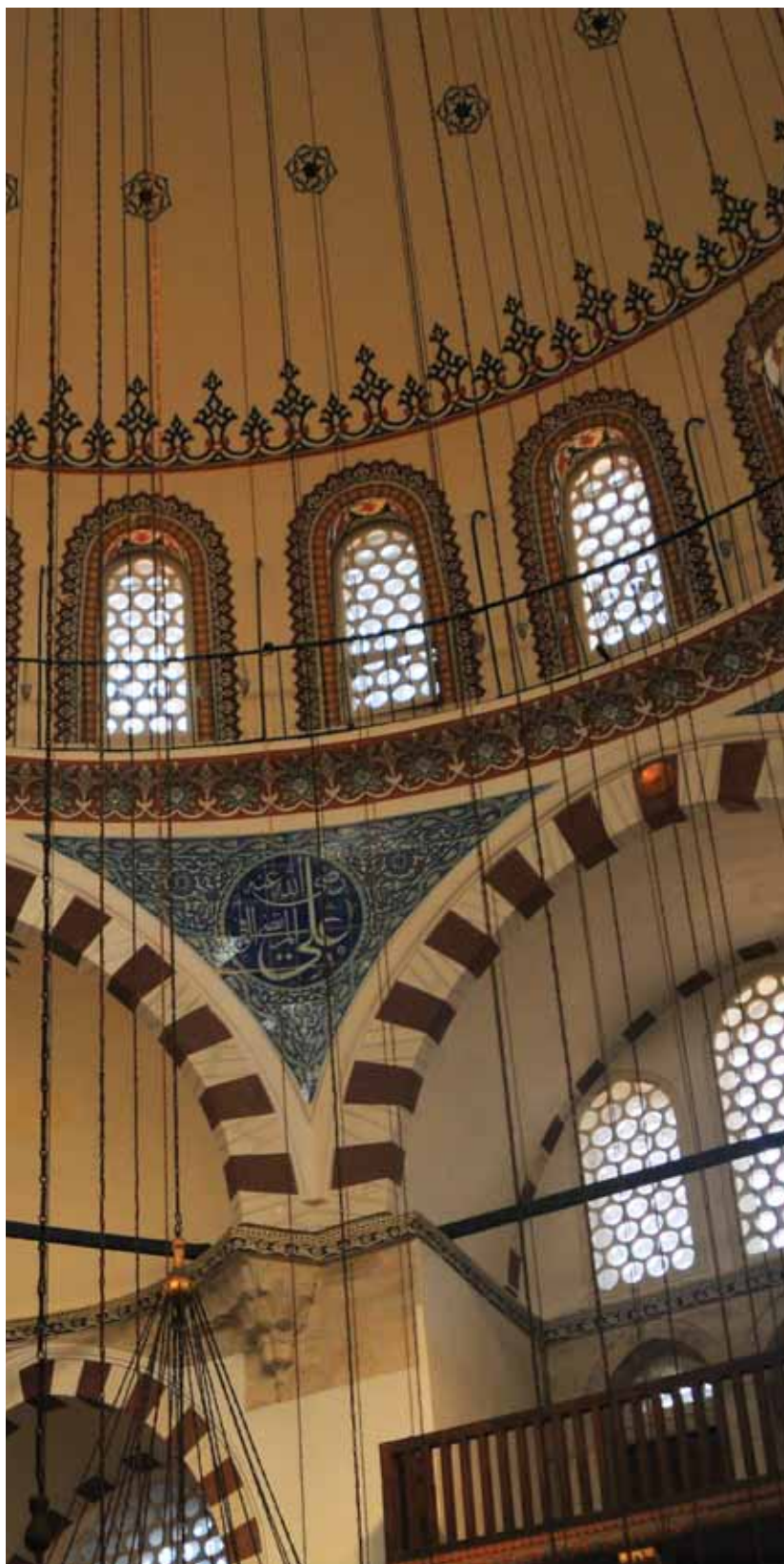




# 4. FATİH - HASEKİ TOURS

The Tomb of Hüsrev Pasha - Bali Pasha Mosque  
-The Masjid of Mimar Sinan - Sultan Selim  
Madrasah - The Tomb of Şah Huban Hatun -  
Kara Ahmet Pasha Mosque and Complex - Hadım  
İbrahim Pasha Mosque - The Masjid of Arakiyeci  
Ahmet Çelebi - Ramazan Effendi Mosque







*Bali Pasha Mosque*

**The Tomb of Hüsrev Pasha** (1545-1546) (4A), considered as the most elegant of all the Viziers' tombs, and **Bali Pasha Mosque** (4B), which are very close to each other are remarkable for their finesse and elegant architecture created by Mimar Sinan. The palmette and muqarnas decorations on the canopy surrounding the tomb reflect the architectural innovation created by Sinan. While Bali Pasha Mosque was recorded in the document listing Mimar Sinan's works, it was built in 1504 and it is therefore doubtful that it is a work of Sinan. The generally accepted idea is that the mosque was extensively repaired by Mimar Sinan following substantial damage caused by an earthquake. However, since the building has suffered successive fire and earthquake damage, at present it has lost most of the architectural features of the period.



The next stop is the **Masjid of Mimar Sinan** (1573) (4C), situated at the junction of Akşemsettin and Koca Sinan streets and renowned not for the mastery of Sinan but because it hints at his modest personality. Mimar Sinan tried to avoid pretentiousness in the buildings that would bear his name. The Masjid of Mimar Sinan is one of the best examples of this. Compared to the monumental buildings where the grand master displayed his superb skills, you may wonder why the masjid was built so small and plain. The answer is Mimar Sinan's modesty.

After the masjid you can visit two other buildings on the Adnan Menderes Boulevard that stand close to one another. The first is the **Sultan Selim Madrasah** (1548-1550) (4D), which was built as a standalone building, not as part of a complex. At a later date a minaret was added to one of the rooms of the madrasah to convert it into a mosque. The **Tomb** built for **Şah Huban Hatun** (4E), who was the wife of Sultan Murat III is very near to the madrasah.

*Masjid of Mimar Sinan*





The next stop on the tour is the **Kara Ahmet Pasha Complex and Mosque** (1558) (4F). The tomb of Kara Ahmet Pasha, who was one of the Grand Viziers of Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent, is situated within the courtyard of the complex. The courtyard of the mosque was surrounded on three sides by the rooms of the madrasah and the ablution fountain was built in the middle. The mosque and the madrasah were built according to a plan similar to the Sinan Pasha Mosque in Beşiktaş. After construction commenced, Kara Ahmet Pasha was executed and the mosque and complex were completed under the direction of a trustee. We recommend that you take a closer look at the painted wall decorations as well as the marble minber.

At Silivrikapı portal on the city walls, which you can reach by public transport, stands the **Hadım İbrahim Pasha Mosque** (1551) (4G), which is one of the best preserved mosques by Mimar Sinan. As we have seen, Sinan tried to include new ideas in almost every one of his major buildings and here he tried a new method using flying buttresses.

The **Masjid of Arakiyeci Ahmet Çelebi** (4H) was mostly built by Mimar Sinan but it has lost almost all of its original features. However, if you have already visited the Hadım İbrahim Pasha Mosque, it is worth taking a short walk to this masjid as well. The masjid was also known as **Meşeli** (with oak beams) because of the oak beams protruding from the plasterwork. Like many of the original features, the protruding beams were also lost.



*Kara Ahmet Pasha Complex and Mosque*

**Hüsrev Çelebi (Ramazan Effendi) Mosque (4I)** is the last stop on this tour. The appearance of its plain exterior is in contrast to the superb İznik tile decoration of the interior. However, don't let the beauty of these tiles make you forget to get a closer look at the fine carvings on the marble minber, which is one of the most superb examples of the period.



*Hadım İbrahim Pasha Mosque*









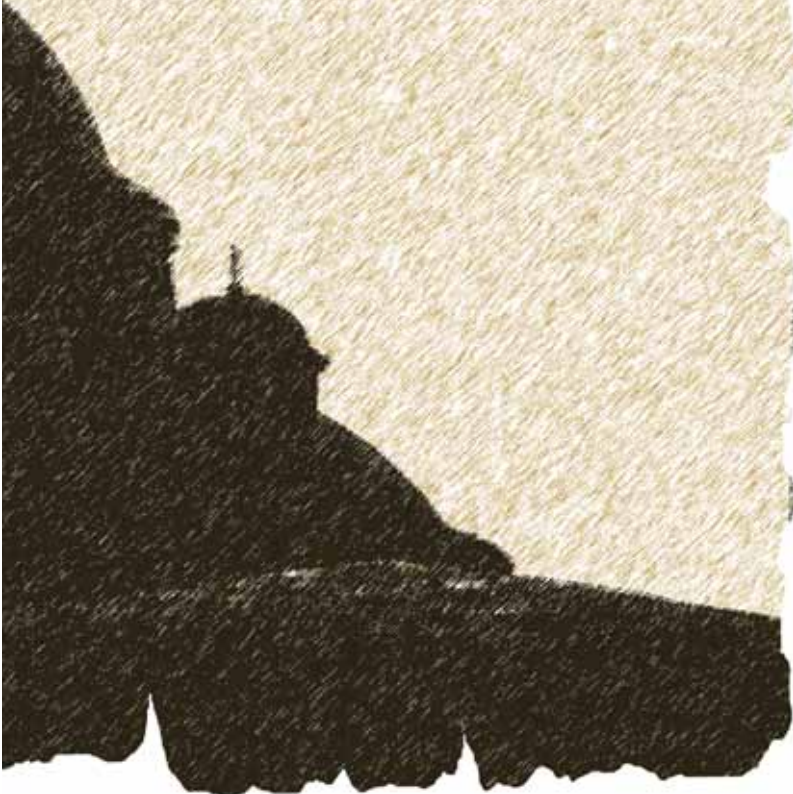






# 5. HASEKİ - EMİNÖNÜ TOURS

**Haseki Mosque and Complex - Şehzade Mosque  
and Complex - Süleymaniye Mosque and Complex  
- Rüstem Pasha Mosque**





The last part of our tour in the footsteps of Mimar Sinan follows the development of his style from his early works to his masterpieces. He defined two of his buildings as steps in his architecture: the first one is Şehzade Mosque, which he defined as the work of his apprenticeship; and the second one is Süleymaniye Mosque, which has become one of the symbols of İstanbul, defined by him as the work of his craftsmanship. You will be able to visit both of them on this tour. This is the most tiring of all the Mimar Sinan tours in İstanbul, not because of the distance or of walking uphill, but because of the breathtaking beauty of each building which compels you to spend a lot of time at each stop.

While Mimar Sinan was serving in the army he first came to people's attention in 1538 when he successfully built a bridge spanning the River Prut in a surprisingly short time. He was appointed as the Chief Royal Architect later the same year, and served in that capacity for the next fifty years. The first stop on this tour is **Haseki Mosque and Complex** (1538-1539) (5A), the first building Sinan undertook as a Chief Royal Architect.

Sinan built this complex which includes a mosque, a madrasah, a hospital, a public kitchen and shops in two stages. The complex as a whole bears the hallmarks of traditional Seljuk and Ottoman architecture and its plan has similar characteristics with the earlier examples. However, Mimar Sinan's innovative and experimenting personality reflects itself in the hospital building, which is situated in the centre of the complex. The hospital has an octagonal courtyard surrounded by enclosed spaces by three sides, a feature which is unique in Ottoman architecture. In short, Sinan gave his first hint that he would continue developing and innovating traditional Turkish architecture. In his original design it was to be a single dome mosque. However, at a later date it was converted into a two-dome mosque.

*Haseki Mosque and Complex*







The next stop is what Mimar Sinan called his apprenticeship work, **Şehzade Mosque and Complex** (1543–1548) (5B), and as it is quite far away from Haseki Mosque we advise you to use public transport. Şehzade Mosque was built while the construction of the Mihrimah Sultan Mosque was also taking place and it is quite an important building of his career. Mimar Sinan, who was awarded the title of the architect of the world, built his masterpieces relying on the experiences he gathered during the design and construction of the Şehzade Mosque. Therefore, he refers to the building as the work of his apprenticeship. Within the complex are a mosque, a madrasah, public kitchens, a hospital and the tombs of many important personages from Ottoman history. The tomb of Şehzade Mehmet, to whom the mosque was dedicated, is just outside the courtyard and lay side by side with the tomb of Rüstem Pasha built in 1561.





Sinan experimented with the features of the Tomb of Şehzade Mehmet. However, he did not use those features in any other building. The tomb was built with coloured stones and bricks, in order to indicate how early and in vain was the death of Şehzade Mehmet, who died when he was just 22 years old. The tiles were produced using a multi-colour glazing technique and the tomb has a ribbed dome. The door handles have a dragon design. The small throne over the sarcophagus of the Şehzade was to indicate that he was the heir apparent had he lived. The striking feature of Mimar Sinan's mosques was the developed central space. For this purpose Sinan tried to get rid of the columns dividing the central space and supported the central dome with four half-domes to achieve the effect of unbroken space. This design was first employed in the Şehzade Mosque. The central dome with its 19-metre diameter and 37-metre height was the most monumental example that was ever undertaken by an Ottoman architect.

The rich decorations of the interior could be a reflection of Sinan's efforts to cheer up Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent after the untimely demise of his favourite son, Şehzade Mehmet. The monumental dome and rich decorations will compel you to stay longer. However, you must remember that the next stop is the Süleymaniye Mosque with its picture postcard views of İstanbul and renowned as the most beautiful mosque created by Sinan in İstanbul.



*Süleymaniye Mosque and Complex*



**Süleymaniye Mosque and Complex** (1550-1557) (5C), dedicated to Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent, is situated on one of the seven hills of İstanbul. Despite its glorious dimensions, it has fairly simple characteristics. Some consider that it was due to the Sultan's modesty, while others argue that Mimar Sinan designed it so that the architectural features of the building showed themselves without being clouded by decorative elements. Its interior is also very plain except for the tiled surround of the mihrab. The only items that are more intricate are the stained glass windows done by Master İbrahim the Drunkard, who was the most famous glazing artist of the period.

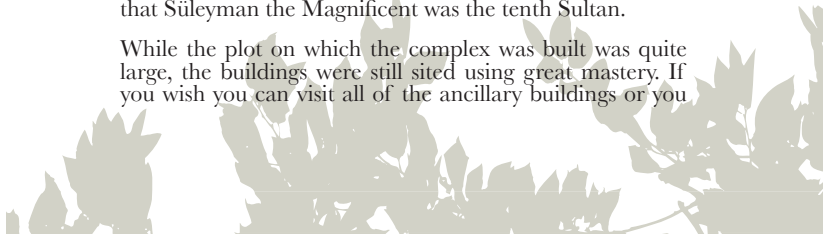
The Mosque is the most monumental masterpiece built by Mimar Sinan in İstanbul. The monumental nature was to glorify the memory of Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent. Mimar Sinan referred to Süleymaniye as 'the work of my craftsmanship'. However, every nook and cranny of the design and construction reflects his genius and achieving such elegant proportions in such a massive building is really beyond the reach of mere mortals.


The wonderful aspect of the mosque allows us to explore and find many enigmatic features. For example, you may wonder how this monumental structure withstood successive earthquakes over the centuries. Then you realise that Mimar Sinan used poles made from juniper trees to ensure a more elastic response to earthquake waves and thereby create a less damaging effect.

Yet another interesting feature of the mosque is the chamber for collecting the candle soot. There were about three hundred candles and lamps for internal illumination and the soot produced was carried by an air current (so that it was not deposited on the walls or ceiling) to the candle soot chamber, where it was collected and used for producing ink. The ink had a certain water resistance and was the preferred writing material for documents. The most important edicts of the Ottoman Empire were written with this type of ink. Creating such a beneficial air current within the large internal space of the mosque was quite an intricate job. While the existence and workings of the system are well known, the actual calculations and design have remained unknown to date.

Almost every detail of the mosque has a touch of genius. For example, the main dome was surrounded by a steel ring, and two hundred and fifty-five large pots were implanted into the dome masonry to provide better acoustics and thermal insulation. The symbolic numbers were also believed to be associated with the design of the mosque, such as the four minarets of the mosque signifying the first four Caliphs; or the fact that Süleyman the Magnificent was the fourth Sultan to have reigned in İstanbul; or the four principal Islamic sects. The total number of adhan platforms is ten and are believed to signify the ten companions of the Prophet who were promised a place in Heaven, or the fact that Süleyman the Magnificent was the tenth Sultan.

While the plot on which the complex was built was quite large, the buildings were still sited using great mastery. If you wish you can visit all of the ancillary buildings or you





may spend your time in the enchanting mosque. The choice is yours. Each building in the complex has a special and valuable aesthetic characteristic. The hospital section has a layout similar to modern research hospitals or medical faculties. There are two departments; one of them caters to patients while the other is for education and training purposes. It was recorded that music was used for the treatment of mental patients in this hospital. Unfortunately the building used as a medical madrasah did not fully survive. There are various madrasahs surrounding the mosque and each provided a different level of education. The dining hall of the madrasah now serves as a restaurant. The tomb of Hürrem Sultan and the Tomb of Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent were also the creations of Mimar Sinan and they are considered as the most elegant of all Sultan tombs.

At the end of this tour we pay homage to Mimar Sinan, whose simple and plain tomb is just across from one of the most grandiose buildings he had designed and built. As you have been witness to the greatness and genius of Mimar Sinan through his footsteps in İstanbul, we hope you would also like to visit his tomb and say a little prayer or pay homage to the Architect Royal.

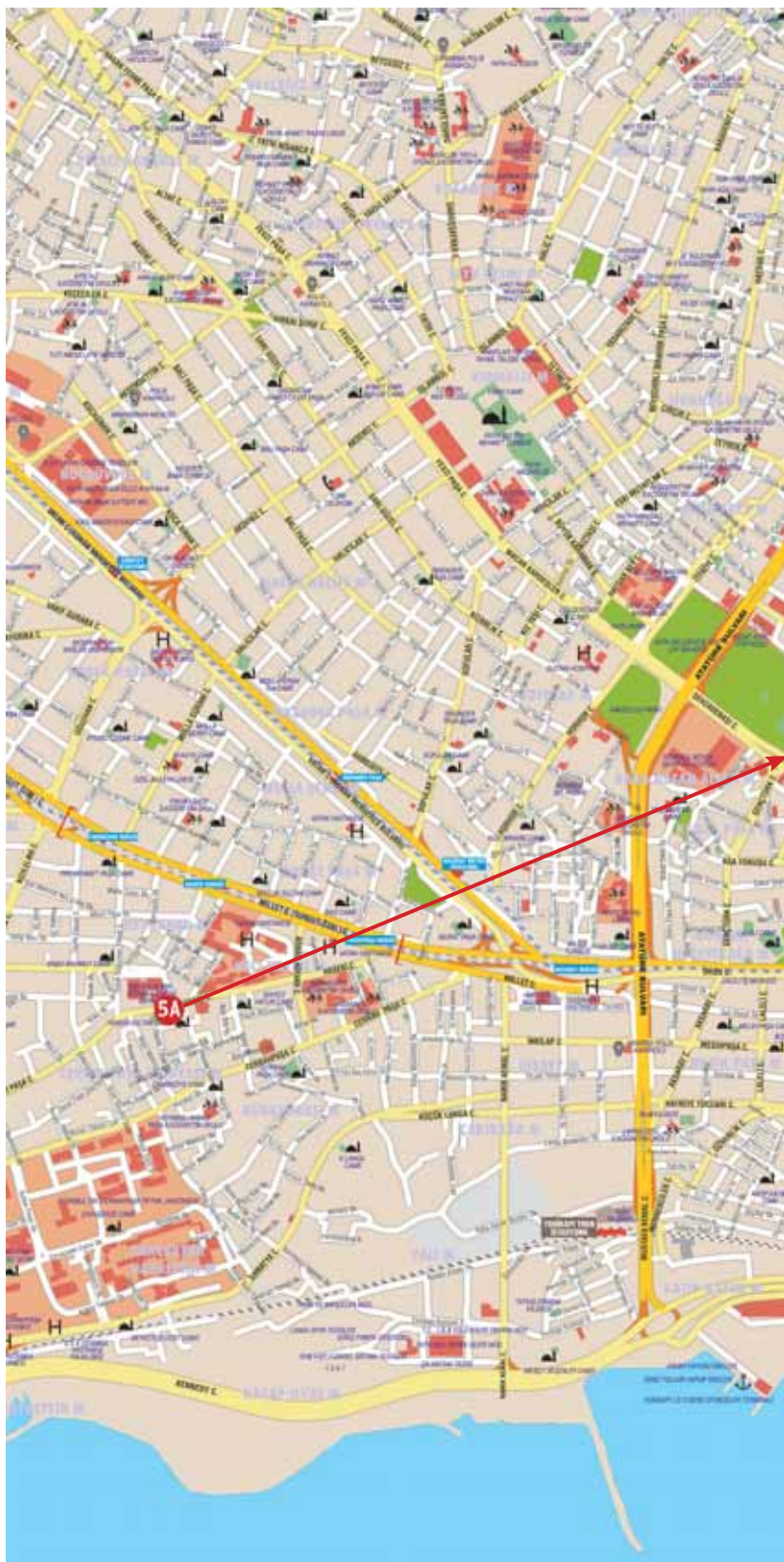
The last creation by Mimar Sinan that this tour takes you to is the **Rüstem Pasha Mosque** (1561-1562) (5D), built on a high platform to command the view of the İstanbul, near the Eminönü Square and next to the Galata Bridge, which has been one of the busiest parts of the city since Roman times. One of the striking features of this mosque, which makes it one of the most beautiful buildings by Mimar Sinan, is the İznik tile decoration that starts when you enter into the space of late congregants and continues throughout the interior, in effect taking you from the outer world into a new and mysterious inner world. Rüstem Pasha was a Grand Vizier famous for his penny pinching but during the last period of his life when the mosque was built he did not hold back and even splurged on this building very much to create the exquisite tile decorations. The period when the mosque was built was also a period of innovation and improvement in the production techniques of Ottoman tiles. The effect of these developments can be seen in the mosque. The interior decoration is so rich even today that they would shame a tile museum. The interior has been described as serene and this effect on the human soul is the direct result of the tile decorations. Numerous tile masters who were trained by the royal workshops have displayed their skills in different parts of the mosque and the most important of them all, the mihrab, was decorated by the chief tile master. The importance of the mosque in regards to Turkish tile art is that it displays the oldest designs, that were to disappear in subsequent centuries, as well as completely new designs being used. Most of the works of Sinan are plain and devoid of excess decoration. Decorative elements were used where they were absolutely necessary. By doing so he brought the architectural elements to the fore. The extensive tile decorations covering the whole of the interior of some of Sinan's buildings seem to be the result of express desires from his patrons.

We complete our tour still following in the footsteps of Mimar Sinan. You have witnessed the mastery of a genius as well as the superb results he has achieved by merging his mastery with the natural beauty of the city. You are now familiar with the works of Mimar Sinan and with İstanbul, the city of Mimar Sinan. We are sure that you will have a picture of İstanbul etched in your memory.



*Rüstem Pasha Mosque*













*Suleymaniye Mosque*





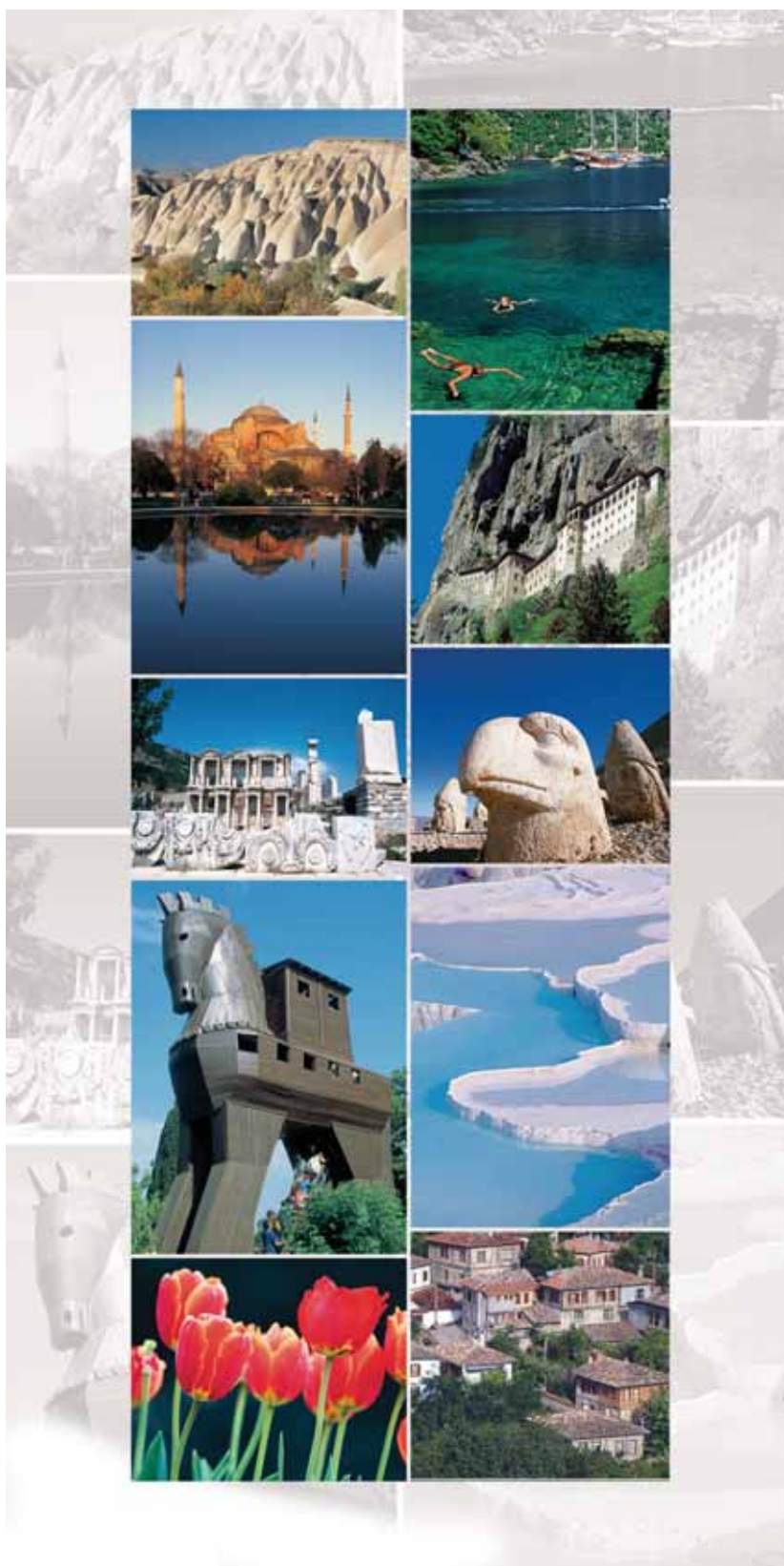
## **Mimar “the Great” Sinan (1489-1588)**

Mimar Sinan was born in Ağırnas district of Kayseri and in 1512 he was conscripted to be trained as an apprentice to the Janissary Corps, his first step to becoming a world-renowned architect and to be titled as “the Great”. During the reigns of Sultan Selim the Grim and Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent he took part in various military campaigns with diverse duties. In 1538, as a member of a bridge building corps, Sinan built a bridge across the River Prut in just thirteen days. Following this achievement, which indicated his genius, and after several other roles he had in building works, he was appointed Chief Royal Architect in 1538 and remained in that post for many years, building over three hundred



diverse structures including mosques, masjids, madrasahs, tombs, bridges, caravanserais and hammams. Mimar Sinan is regarded as the architect who epitomises the specific and defining features of Ottoman architecture, and as the creator of classic Ottoman architecture. He gained knowledge of the architectural traits of different cultures through the voyages he undertook and the military campaigns he took part in and incorporated them into Turkish culture and Ottoman architecture to create monumental and marvellous architectural masterpieces. Mimar Sinan's expertise in the construction of domes was unsurpassed. His masterpieces are not only superb technical achievements but also the reflection of the highest aesthetic values attained in the history of architecture. His masterpieces adorned various parts of the Ottoman Empire and the most magnificent examples of them can be seen in İstanbul.





## Cultural Heritage is Fragile

The world's cultural heritage is like a big puzzle. Each monument, each object, is an irreplaceable part of the overall picture which gives us insight into our origins, our development and our lives today. It helps us to understand and appreciate other cultures. Each discovery, each new interpretation adds to the puzzle and makes the picture clearer. We must ensure the protection of every single piece today, so that future generations may have the opportunities to enjoy the puzzle.

Many people are not aware that our cultural heritage is under stress from natural disasters such as earthquakes and floods, and from slower acting processes such as pollution or human actions. Even the most innocent gestures such as collecting ancient pieces of pottery or mosaics as souvenirs have a destructive impact if repeated by thousands. Touching an object of stone, metal or textile leaves traces of grease, acid or sweat on its surface. Climbing a monument wears down the structure underneath and can dismantle it. Writing or engraving names inflicts permanent damage. Strolling around narrow crowded places with bulky bags or backpacks might knock over an object or scratch a mural painting and ruin it. There are countless ways in which one can unknowingly contribute to the destruction of cultural heritage.

In 2020 there will be 1.6 billion visitors per year worldwide. Let us raise awareness of this issue so that we may join together to protect and enjoy the diversity and richness of our cultural heritage.

**International Organization for Conservation  
of Cultural Heritage (ICCROM)**



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