

## *Whirling Dervishes "Sema" at Hodjapasha*

Depart from the hotel to watch the ceremony of Whirling Dervishes called "Sema".

Sema ceremony is a mystical journey of man's spiritual ascent through mind and love to the "Perfect". A Sufi order founded in Konya, Turkey *Mevlevi Order* was established by the followers of Mevlana Celaledding Rumi, a 13th century Islamic poet and theologian.



They are known as the Whirling Dervishes due to their famous practice of whirling as a form of *dhikr* (remembrance of God). Dervish is a common term for an initiate of the Sufi path; the whirling is part of the formal *Sema* ceremony and the participants are properly known as *semazens*.

Turning towards the truth, the follower grows through love, deserts his ego, finds the truth, and arrives at the "Perfect". He then returns from this spiritual journey as a man who has reached maturity and a greater perfection, able to love and to be of service to the whole of creation.





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Mevlana Celaleddin Rumi has said in reference to Sema:

*“Come, come, whoever you are,  
Wanderer, worshipper, lover of leaving,  
Ours is not a caravan of despair.  
Even if you have broken your vows a thousand times  
It doesn't matter  
Come, come yet again, come”*

This unique show will have a memorable remark from the beginning where the *Sema*'s bow each other and whirl as the representatives of the moon and the sun separately to the end where they recite prayers from the Qu'ran and complete the Sema.

**HODJAPASHA Culture Center** is located at the center of Historical peninsula of Istanbul and was converted from a 550 years old historical turkish bath called Hocapasa Hamami in 2008. It was originally built by Hoca Sinan Pasa who was a teacher and later vizier to Fatih Sultan Mehmet during 1470's. It was a double bath for both men and women. It was comparatively a big bath with high dome, made of cut stone and also corner walls were designed like a peacock tail.



This building served as a Turkish bath till 1988. Location of the area is called Sirkeci which is next to Topkapı Palace Walls , Sirkeci Train Station formerly known also as Orient Express Train Station and Sultanahmet Area. Hodjapasha Culture Center has two sections. First is an exhibition and foyer area. The other section is performance area which has a circular glass dance floor and a musician stage. Spectator seats are located around circular dance floor and has a capacity of 220 guests. Perfect lighting and beautiful decoration turns this historical building to a mystic place.

