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Spiritual Istanbul; Christianity & Islam & Jewish Mingle

Depart from the hotel to visit the most beautiful and splendid of all the imperial mosques in Istanbul, ***Suleymaniye, the mosque of Suleiman the Magnificent***. Built between the years 1550 and 1557 by Sinan, the greatest of all Ottoman architects; Suleymaniye Mosque was built with the wishes to surpass the builders of St. Sophia. Like other works of that time, Suleymaniye is not only a mosque but also a huge complex. It is an edifice which typifies the Ottoman Empire at its peak. The magnificence of the mosque, clearly reflected in its architecture, also prevails in the interior, in the fine portal gates, carved marble mihrab and mimber and even the carpets, chandeliers and bronze candlesticks.

Continue to visit ***Kariye Museum***. Kariye is the Turkish adaptation of the ancient Greek word "chora" which refers to "countryside". The church was built in the 4th century during the Byzantine days, then outside the city walls. First converted into a mosque during the 16th century, it was finally made a museum in 1948, leaving no Islamic element in the building except the minaret. The walls are decorated with superb 14th century-frescoes, and mosaics on a gold ground.





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Located in Karakoy district, **Jewish Museum of Turkey** (officially *Quincentennial Foundation Museum of Turkish Jews*) is a cultural center established by the Quincentennial Foundation to inform the society of the traditions and history of Turkish Jewry. It was inaugurated on November 25, 2001. The Quincentennial Foundation was established in 1989 by 113 Turkish citizens, Jews and Muslims alike, to celebrate the five hundredth anniversary of Sephardim's arrival to the Ottoman Empire.

The idea of a museum was proposed by Naim Guleryuz who is now its curator and the foundation was financed by the prominent Jewish Kamhi family.

Jewish Museum of Turkey includes sections on the intermingling cultures of Jewish and Muslim Turks and ethnographic articles that depict the traditions of Turkish Jews, as well as the historical accounts of the Jewish odyssey from Spain to Turkey.

