



10 OF THE Best LUXURY HOTELS IN TURKEY

The destination is moving rapidly upmarket

@JoBooth_travel

FAST FACT
Undiscovered Ayvalik is home to the 91-room Murat Reis, from the same group as D-Hotel Maris

Helicopter transfers? But of course. A pillow menu – for the kids? No problem. Tennis with a Wimbledon champion? All part of the service. And where will you find this embarrassment of luxuries? Turkey.

It may have made its name duelling with Spain for the affections of the low-cost market, but budget all-inclusives are just the bread in Turkey's sandwich. The filling – of quality, high-end hotels – gets richer and more thickly spread with every passing year. From grande dames and chic urban boltholes in Istanbul to secluded boutiques and palatial resorts with every conceivable facility on the coast, Turkey's hotel stock can be tailored to the full gamut of wealthy clientele.

1 CIRAGAN PALACE KEMPINSKI
This hotel takes its host city Istanbul's lead and blends ancient and modern. Most of the 313 rooms are in the new-build hotel, but big spenders can choose one of 11 butler-serviced suites in the renovated 19th-century palace, which has a private entrance conveniently located next to the hotel's helipad. Guests can also arrive by limousine or even yacht, as the property sits on the banks of the Bosphorus – 80% of rooms have river views. Cocktails, champagne, cognac and cigars are on offer at Le Fumoir, a

bar set among the palm trees. Former guests include Madonna, Sting, Oprah Winfrey and Bill Clinton.
BOOK IT: From £392, including breakfast.
kempinski.com

2 MAXX ROYAL KEMER
When it comes to gripes with the all-inclusive concept, one of the most common is the buffet – an anathema to many high-end guests. Which is why, when opening its second Antalya property, Maxx Royal decided to take the hit on profits and make all its restaurants a la carte except at breakfast. All, from the sushi bar to the steak house, are included in the package price. Dining isn't the only sphere in which this hotel exceeds expectations of an all-inclusive. The rooms are huge, with the smallest 100sq m. The kids' programme includes clubs for different ages, a funfair, water park and cinemas showing movies in different languages. The entertainment is also a cut above, with this year's line-up featuring LMFAO and Elijah Wood.
BOOK IT: From £335 per person, on an all-inclusive basis.
maxxroyal.com

3 DIONYSOS ESTATE
Tucked away on the Bozburun Peninsula, closer to Marmaris than

its tranquillity would suggest, Dionysos Estate is perched on a jaw-dropping canyon with views over the Bay of Kumlubuk. All 43 sleek units at this rural retreat – rooms, cottages and villas with private pools – have terraces, plus there's a beach club with a choice of watersports, a Decleor spa with open-air hot tubs and an organic farm that supplies the hotel's three restaurants and puts together picnic lunches. This season, the property is offering a range of activities at no extra charge, including a gulet cruise, guided walks and, for kids, a visit to a farm to hand-feed animals. It's offered in the UK exclusively through Exclusive Escapes.
BOOK IT: From £150.
dionysoshotel.com.tr

4 GLORIA SERENITY RESORT
Belek is the home of golf in Turkey, and the Gloria Serenity Resort is the biggest course in the country, with 45 holes, and has the biggest golf academy, offering individual, group and junior teaching programmes, and a driving range with 48 bays and grass tee areas for 80. The 369-room Gloria Serenity Resort is the most luxurious of the chain's properties – even entry-level rooms are 39sq m, and suites come with Jacuzzis on the terrace. For non-golfers, there's a large spa offering Turkish and Far Eastern treatments, plus a huge range of other activities

including a climbing wall, beach volleyball, zumba and bowling, as well as football pitches and tennis courts.
BOOK IT: From £325 on an all-inclusive basis.
gloria.com.tr

5 ALAVYA
The narrow, cobbled streets of Aegean town Alacati attract an upmarket set with its galleries, slow food scene and beach clubs. This boutique is a perfect fit – the 25 rooms, decorated with works by contemporary Turkish artists, are scattered through six historic stone houses, some facing a large courtyard and others small patios shaded by olive and white mulberry trees. The bar restaurant has a resident DJ, there's a strong yoga and pilates programme, and a private yacht is available for day cruises and overnight stays.
BOOK IT: From £135, including breakfast.
alavya.com.tr

6 WITT HOTEL ISTANBUL
This design-focused boutique is the spot in Istanbul for guests who prefer Turkey's cutting-edge modernity to its history. The work of super-trendy design house Autoban, its 18 loft-style rooms feature leather, plywood and black tiles, with sleek furniture – somewhat unsurprisingly, Witt is a member of Design Hotels. ➔

→ Turkish buffet breakfasts are served every morning, either in the lobby or in the rooms for no extra charge, but guests are on their own for lunch and dinner – hardly a problem in the cool Cihangir neighbourhood, Istanbul's equivalent to New York's Meatpacking District. The fragrant roof garden has views of the Bosphorus.

BOOK IT: From £160.

wittistanbul.com

7 D-HOTEL MARIS

Set on a stunning hillside on the Datca Peninsula, this swish 193-room hotel could sit on the laurels of its looks. But it works hard for its clients, laying on a private helicopter, sailing and motor yachts, and a tennis academy under the auspices of no less a star than former Wimbledon champion Goran Ivanisevic, who will be available to play tennis

with guests in person from August 3-9. The hotel has five beaches, and the watersports on offer include surfing, diving, and wake boarding. Celebrity favourite fitness and nutrition programme Bodyism has a residency here, with personal training sessions and 'clean and lean' menus. Dining options also include a branch of acclaimed Japanese restaurant Zuma.

BOOK IT: From £178, including breakfast.

dhotel.com.tr

8 MUSEUM HOTEL

Turkey's only Relais & Châteaux member isn't in Istanbul, or on the coast. It's in the central region of Cappadocia – a wilderness with unique rock formations. Museum Hotel has 30 rooms, some in the area's signature caves, but all packed with antique furniture. Fresh vegetables come from →

D-Hotel Maris



LEFT: Jumeirah Bodrum Palace

RIGHT: Gloria Serenity Resort

BELOW: Museum Hotel



DO

Upgrade luxury clients to Turkish Airlines' business-class where their inflight meals will be prepared by 'flying chefs' with fresh produce, on a menu that rotates weekly.

DON'T

Forget to organise an e-visa in advance to speed your clients' progress at immigration – they cost \$20 and are available from 90 days prior to travel at evisa.gov.tr/en

→ the organic garden, and guests can take cooking classes with the award-winning chef. Massages can take place on a private terrace, or in a hidden valley in the countryside. Guests can even play 'cross golf', which is played into nets nestled among Cappadocia's rocky terrain.

BOOK IT: From £214
museum-hotel.com

9 KAYHAN 3
It's not technically a hotel, but gulet cruises are a growing part of the Turkish market, so it's good to have an upmarket option up your sleeve. Twin-masted, *Kayhan 3* is new to Exclusive Escapes'

programme and is contemporary in style, with five en suite cabins, teak decks with day beds and even free Wi-Fi. There's a skipper, chef and crew, so guests need only choose between lazing around the boat and an activity, whether it be snorkelling, sea-kayaking, fishing or heading ashore for a sightseeing trip. There's afternoon tea and cake as well as three a la carte meals a day, and – while guests don't need to – the boat itself is dressed for dinner, with twinkling lanterns accompanying meals under the stars.

BOOK IT: From £800 per person for seven nights' full-board
exclusiveescapes.co.uk

10 JUMEIRAH BODRUM PALACE

Forget minimalism – at Jumeirah's newest hotel it's all about more, from the lavish decor in the 135 suites and villas to the seven public, three saltwater and 58 private swimming pools. The beach club hosts DJs and movie screenings, with cocktails and canapés served each night. Villa guests get a private butler, while even children get their own pillow menu and Bulgari amenities.

BOOK IT: From £356
jumeirah.com

All prices are per room per night unless otherwise stated

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