



Master Copy

Location

The Witt Istanbul Hotel is situated on a steep hill in Cihangir, a trendy neighborhood with a bohemian flair. Its narrow streets are home to a thriving arts scene and a jumble of local (designer) boutiques, trendy cafés and some of the finest restaurants in the city – all within walking distance from the hotel. It also offers magnificent views of the skyline’s domes and spires – even better than being in the shadow of them. It’s a bustling gentrified quarter only Istanbul insiders know about and the ideal spot if you want to experience what it is like to ‘live’ among the locals.

Cihangir offers an oasis of calm in this bustling city, without being isolated from all the action. Most of Istanbul’s main tourist attractions are just 5-10 minutes away from the Witt Istanbul Hotel. It’s within walking distance of famous spots such as Taksim Square, Istiklal Caddesi and Istanbul Modern. The Sultanahmet quarter – with among others the Topkapi Palace, the Hagia Sophia, the Blue Mosque, and the Basilica Cistern – can be equally quickly reached by a short tram or taxi ride.

Cihangir is one of the first truly gentrified neighborhoods of Istanbul. Just like New York’s Meatpacking district or London’s SoHo, Cihangir is quietly exciting. It’s an enclave of funky cafés, restaurants and boutiques filled with hipsters tapping their laptops and local artists alike. In short, it’s currently the place to be seen, to shop and to dine out.

First-timers to Istanbul tend to stay among the major sightseeing spots in the Sultanahmet quarter or Taksim district. But why miss the opportunity to have the best from both worlds?

The Story

Investor Tuncel Toprak studied economics at Rutgers University in the USA. After a brief stint working in the financial industry, he returned to Istanbul to follow his dream of opening a boutique hotel.

Tuncel spent years tracking down the right location for his first hotel project – Witt Istanbul Hotel. He finally settled on a corner block in Cihangir. In spring 2008 this former headquarters of Ogilvy & Mather was nipped, tucked and stylishly reshaped into a luxurious all-suites property, showcasing furnishings from designers around the world.

'I wanted to stay away from the tourist areas of Taksim Square and Sultanahmet. Here you can be an insider and hang out with locals,' Tuncel says.

From the outside, Witt Istanbul Hotel's traditional Turkish sandstone facade looks like a nondescript apartment block. But kitted out exclusively in bespoke furniture by Autoban, Turkey's top interior designers, and with bathroom and mini-bar fixtures from Ross Lovegrove, Witt Istanbul Hotel is far from ordinary. The end result is domestic luxury rather than hotel swank. The non-chain, non-banded 17 suite luxury boutique hotel is diminutive, discreet and designer without being garishly so. It all makes for the perfect pied-a-terre in the vibrant Beyoğlu neighborhood.

The concept of creating spacious modern-retro suites for the price of a nice hotel room turned out to be quite an accommodation revolution which didn't go unnoticed. Witt Istanbul Hotel became a big hit. It has been selected as one of Wallpaper Magazine's best new hotels, and placed on the 2009 Conde Nast Hot List.

Rewards and recognitions received thanks to attention for design detail showcasing local talent, the attentiveness of the staff, and a convenient location overlooking the Bosphorus Strait and the old city alike.

Design

Autoban's signature modernist style is imprinted on the 17 open-plan suites. Even while taking a modernist approach, Autoban understood the importance of neighboring buildings, whose venerable architectural style - featuring long windows and French balconies - has been incorporated into the facade of the Istanbul Suites, where windows not only allude to the past in terms of form, but literally frame views of the historical quarter of Istanbul.

To complement the interesting details of yesteryear, Autoban infused the suites with a true touch of 21st-century design: laser-cut panels of wood or steel. The laser-cut floral motif repeatedly appears throughout the hotel's public spaces and 17 individual suites.

Autoban's cohesive plan included the interior design as well. The firm selected furniture from its own collection and adapted the pieces especially for these hotel interiors. Helping to bridge the gap between past and present is an abundance of traditional Marmara marble, an iconic material used extensively by the builders of the Ottoman Empire. A perfectly balanced combination of history and contemporaneity is hard to achieve, but visitors to the Istanbul Suites will find that Autoban has managed to accomplish its key goal to perfection.

About Autoban

The founders of Autoban, Seyhan Özdemir and Sefer Çağlar, have been working with leaders in various fields - notably interior design, architecture and product development - since 2003. Autoban specializes in the design of upscale department stores, movie theatres, cafes, restaurants and hotels. The aim of the design team is to create exclusive spaces that surpass anything done in the past in terms of the unique experiences they offer. Autoban is located, in a rapidly up-and-coming area of Istanbul.

Guest Rooms

The 18 generously proportioned, open-plan airy suites feel more like loft apartments than standard hotel rooms. All suites are minimum 40 square meters (430 square feet) and showcase hip retro-modern design. They are sparkling and snazzy, yet so seductively comfortable you may find yourself staying in.

Every conceivable comfort has been considered. Laser-cut perforated floral motif walls and pale marble juxtaposed with black tile, hardwood floors, organic wood furnishings, plywood Magnolia lights, king-size wardrobes, a boxy leather sofa, a rocking chair for lounging, and mirrored in-room kitchenettes equipped with a Nespresso machine and microwave create a luxury loft vibe.

All suites also feature high-tech luxury equipment such as individually controlled A/C, premium free broadband Wi-Fi, iPod dock, flat screen satellite TV, cordless telephone and a laptop-sized security box to accommodate all your needs.

The grey-marble bathrooms are evocative of traditional Turkish baths; but instead of a slab of olive-oil soap and a threadbare towel, you get Molton Brown toiletries, sculpted Corian sinks and Ross Lovegrove fixtures with a bouquet of no less than six showerheads raining from the ceiling of a shower roomy enough for two.

Oversized beds with winged leather headboards and crisp Denizli linen sheets also encourage long lie-ins - especially since you can order breakfast in bed at no extra charge. All guest rooms are equipped with a king size bed. Twin beds are not available. A baby cot is free of charge.

Since the hotel is a corner building, every single suite has stunning views. Guest rooms on the lower floors offer views of Istanbul's vibrant city life (Grand King, 50 m²). Starting from the 4th floor (Grand King Panoramic, 50 m²) you can enjoy breathtaking views including a handful of the city's iconic landmarks and the bustling traffic on the Bosphorus and Golden Horn.

Alternatively, you can trade in the standard French balcony and kitchenette for a glass-walled penthouse suite. Both the Grand King Panoramic with Terrace Suite (40 m²) and the Superior King Panoramic with Terrace Suite (60 m²) have a full blown terrace with deckchairs and sunshade to enjoy these living postcard views.

Amenities/Features

Kitchenette

Nespresso machine

Minibar

Denizli linen sheets, body length towels and bathrobes

Complimentary Molton Brown toiletries

Hairdryer

Individual controlled air-conditioning

Central Heating

Real wardrobe with shelves, drawers, shoe racks and plenty of hangers

Baby Cots

Soundproof walls

Light-proof curtains

Abundance of free easy reachable electrical outlets

Satellite flat screen TV (with mixture of Turkish and international channels)

iPod docking station

Free premium broadband Wi-Fi

Cordless Phone

Safe box (large enough to fit a laptop)

Free parking

Room service

All rooms are non-smoking

Public Spaces

Public spaces are limited to a cozy lobby bar, where guests flick through books available from the hotel's library or use the Apple iMac to check their emails and catch up on the latest news. All are free of charge.

The charming, helpful and English speaking hotel staff, with a 1:1 employee-to-suite ratio, will be glad to assist you with any service you may need: calling a taxi, airport/hotel transfers, picking a restaurant, theatre reservations, city tour recommendations, massage bookings, laundry and dry cleaning, or helping pack or unpack.

Amenities/Features

Lobby bar

Lobby Library

Concierge service

Meeting room

Business facilities

Free premium broadband Wi-Fi throughout the hotel

iMac with Skype headset

Ability to print out boarding pass

Food & Drink

Enjoy breakfast in your room at no extra charge. Or grab the free Turkish Daily News (English language) newspaper on your doorknob and head for the buffet set in the lobby breakfast from 7:30 to 11 a.m. each day in true Le Pain Quotidien-style.

Witt Istanbul home cooked breakfast consists of local organic or at least chemical free products. No efforts are spared to serve guests the highest quality available. For example, all jams are handmade and honey originates from Bodrum. Choices range from Turkish standbys (tomatoes with Basilica dressing, marinated olives, white cheeses, yogurt with dried fruit) to more international fare including dry cereals, a range of egg dishes, breads, pastries and fresh seasonal fruits.

With some of Istanbul's finest restaurants literally only minutes from the hotel and a handful even within walking distance, there is no need for an on-site restaurant. The front desk will be happy to recommend restaurants in the neighborhood or farther afield, and make reservations or arrange to have dinner delivered to your room.

The in-room marble kitchen island in one corner of your suite houses a large sink and mini-bar/fridge. With utensils—from a cutting board to an electric kettle— as well as dishes and glassware, you can prepare snacks and small meals. The mini-bar (stocked with wine and beer, premium liquor, juices, water, and soda) doubles as a refrigerator roomy enough for purchases at neighborhood markets. You can also get complimentary room service.

At no extra hotel charge, you're also invited to order in from restaurants in the neighborhood.

Amenities/Features:

Free home-cooked breakfast

Room Service

Bar

Restaurants within walking distance

In-room kitchenette

Well-stocked minibar

Ordering in from nearby restaurants at no extra hotel charge

Activities

With the Tophane tram stop almost just around the corner, take an air-conditioned comfortable tram ride (10-15 minutes), taxi ride (but do read our Istanbul taxi tips first!) or walk (30 minutes) across the Galata Bridge to Sultanahmet. This district is home to one of the richest concentrations of ancient relics in the world, among which the Hagia Sophia, the Topkapi Palace, the Süleymaniye and Sultanahmet (or Blue) Mosques, and the Basilica Cistern.

Cruise up and down the Bosphorus on a ferry or make a daytrip to one of Istanbul's Princes' Islands. All the main docks - Karaköy, Eminönü and Kabataş - are close to the hotel.

Join neighborhood artists and intellectuals at corner cafes in Cihangir. Don't miss the meyhanes - outdoor restaurants - where you'll find the locals chatting and dining at candlelit tables.

From the haggles of the Grand Bazaar (Kapalı Çarşı) (10 minutes by tram) and the Spice Market (Mısır Çarşısı) to the high-street stores that line the mile-long pedestrianised İstiklal Caddesi, or the designer boutiques of Nişantaşı, Istanbul is a shopaholic's dreamland.

Beyoğlu is the heart of Istanbul's club scene and many of the better night spots are within walking distance of the hotel. Try out the cool rooftop terrace bars of Istanbul 360 or Mikla. For live performances, check out Nardis Jazz Club or Babylon.

Istanbul is also home to plenty of museums and exhibitions. The famous Istanbul Modern (Istanbul's answer to Tate Modern) is only a five-minute walk from the hotel. The Pera Museum is also only stone's throw away.

We also invite you to check out our online Witt Istanbul Magazine for more local advice and tips.

Kids

Although kids are welcomed and under-sevens stay free, the hotel has no specific facilities for children. The hotel is happy to add baby cot to the spacious suites. The hotel's residential location and kitchen facilities are convenient for families. Keep in mind that each suite (except the penthouse suites) has a low-railed balcony which could be a concern for little ones.

Getting There and Around

From Istanbul's Atatürk International Airport (25km) it's a 30-minute taxi ride from the airport to Beyoğlu, though the journey can take much longer during rush hour. Please download our detailed directions to the hotel in Turkish for taxi drivers. Alternatively, you can ask the hotel to arrange for a transfer. If you are driving, the hotel can pay for parking in a nearby car park.

Once you've arrived, you'll get a pocket-sized brochure with a map. The nearest metro station is Tophane, or Taksim Square, within five minutes by taxi.

FAQ

A: Which credit cards does Witt Istanbul Hotel accept?

Q: We accept Visa, MasterCard, Diners and Amex credit cards, but we do not accept Traveller's Cheques.

Q: What is the Advance Purchase Package, and in what way is it different from an ordinary reservation?

A: Please check our reservation page for a detailed explanation --> reservation page

Q: Does Witt Istanbul Hotel have fitness or jogging facilities?

A: We do not have a fitness center inside the hotel, but a close by center provides discounted daily rates for our guests. Unlike many other European cities, Istanbul is not a jogging-friendly city. Your best bet is probably a run along the Bosphorus, down from the hotel in the direction of Beşiktaş.

Q: Can Witt Istanbul Hotel arrange an airport pick-up service?

A: Of course we can. You can cross the respective request while making your online reservation, or you can send your request by mail to the Witt Istanbul Hotel front desk (link to contact form)

Q: Does Witt Istanbul Hotel have a car park?

A: Witt Istanbul Hotel doesn't have a car park, but we will park your car on the street or in a privately owned car park for you, free of charge.

Q: What is the bedding in the rooms?

A: Every single one of our suites/guest rooms has king size beds. Extra beds are not available, but a baby cot is free of charge.

Q: Can I use my mobile phone in Istanbul?

A: Of course you can. Either check the roaming details of your current mobile operator or use a Turkish SIM card. The choice is yours of course. If you would like to obtain a local SIM card, please check out the major Turkish mobile operator sales offices (Vodafone, Turkcell or Avea) at the airport for advice and the latest promotions.

Q: How far is Witt Istanbul Hotel from Sultanahmet (old city), Taksim and the Bosphorus?

A: Sultanahmet is only a 10 minute tram ride from the hotel, and Taksim is only a 10 minute walk away.

Q: Can I pay with Dollars, Euros, Turkish Liras, or both. What do I bring and where can I get the best exchange rates?

A: Please read our Istanbul Money Strategy: Cash Or Credit Card? --> link to magazine

Q: What are the opening and closing hours of the most popular sightseeing spots in Istanbul?

A: link to magazine, page still to be written