

The Cats of Istanbul: A Glimpse into the Mesmerizing Feline Kingdom of Turkey

When one thinks of Istanbul, the stunning architecture, vibrant markets, and rich history often come to mind. However, there is another aspect of this enchanting city that has captured the attention of locals and tourists alike – the extraordinary cats of Istanbul. These feline creatures hold a special place in the hearts of the people, roaming the streets freely and leaving behind an indelible mark on the city's cultural fabric.

Uncovering the Mystique of Istanbul's Feline Population

Istanbul, formerly known as Constantinople, has a long and storied history that dates back thousands of years. Throughout the ages, cats have always found solace in the city's bustling streets and hidden corners. They have become an integral part of Istanbul's charm, adding to its allure, and serving as captivating muses for photographers, filmmakers, and artists.

One could argue that the cats of Istanbul symbolize the very essence of the city – independent, resilient, and utterly captivating. Their ability to seamlessly blend into the backdrop of the city is a testament to their adaptability, as they effortlessly navigate through historic sites, bazaars, and even local neighborhoods.



The Cats of Istanbul: Or a Turkish Farce in 17

Parts by Jessica Mlinaric (Kindle Edition)

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Legend has it that the fondness for cats in Istanbul has deep roots. According to folklore, Prophet Muhammad himself is said to have cherished felines, and his love for them became a beacon of affection towards cats for Muslims around the world.

The Cats as Guardians of History

One of the most fascinating aspects of Istanbul's feline kingdom is their pivotal role in preserving the city's historical sites. The ancient ruins, mosques, and museums which dot Istanbul's landscape have attracted felines in search of shelter and nourishment for centuries. These cats serve as silent guardians of the city's past, quietly preserving its rich cultural heritage.

The Hagia Sophia, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is a prime example of this interplay between history and cats. As visitors marvel at the grandeur of this architectural marvel, they are often accompanied by the enchanting presence of feline companions prowling gracefully through the hallways and courtyards. These cats have been embraced by locals and tourists alike, with many people considering them a good omen or bringing good fortune.

Similarly, the Topkapi Palace, once the residential landmark of the Ottoman sultans, is home to a thriving feline population. Here, fluffy inhabitants lounge amidst opulent gardens, adding an element of intrigue to this already majestic site. Visitors cannot help but feel a sense of awe as they witness the harmonious coexistence of history and felines within the palace walls.

A Love Story Like No Other

The Turkish people's fondness for cats is palpable, and it is not uncommon to witness acts of kindness towards these furry residents. Local shop owners often set out bowls of water and food for the cats passing by, creating a network of care and nourishment throughout the city.

The Aynalikavak Pavilion, situated near the Golden Horn, exemplifies this deep-rooted love. This beautiful wooden mansion boasts a labyrinth of cozy rooms, where both tourists and local residents can enjoy a cup of tea amidst the captivating presence of friendly felines. The fusion of architecture, nature, and the feline presence makes for a unique and memorable experience.

Additionally, Istanbul has embraced the philosophy of neutering and spaying its feline population to maintain their health and control their numbers. Organizations such as the Cats of Istanbul Association work tirelessly to ensure the humane treatment of these beloved creatures.

Feline Royalty at the Tomb of Gül Baba

Among the many historical sites in Istanbul, the Tomb of Gül Baba holds a special allure for both locals and cat enthusiasts alike. The tomb, dedicated to the memory of a renowned Ottoman poet and dervish, has become a sanctuary for feline royalty.

The lush gardens surrounding the tomb are adorned with statuesque cats, seemingly paying homage to the revered spiritual leader. The serenity of the surroundings, coupled with the gentle presence of these feline companions, creates a tranquil ambiance that cannot be rivaled.

The Cats of Istanbul: More Than Just Cute Companions

While the cats of Istanbul are undeniably adorable, their presence extends beyond mere companionship. They have become an emblem of the city's spirit, capturing the hearts of locals and visitors alike. With their graceful poise and untamed independence, these creatures embody the essence of Istanbul – a city that harmoniously unites the old and new, the historical and the contemporary.

If you ever visit Istanbul, be sure to keep your eyes open for the enchanting feline inhabitants. They not only enhance the city's aesthetic appeal but also serve as a reminder of the historical tapestry that envelops this captivating metropolis.

So, the next time you find yourself wandering through the vibrant streets of Istanbul, take a moment to appreciate the cats that grace your path. Their presence is a testament to the city's enduring allure, an embodiment of the captivating essence that makes Istanbul an extraordinary destination.

In Istanbul, the feline kingdom reigns supreme, captivating hearts and minds in a way only they can. Discover the magic of the cats of Istanbul yourself, and prepare to be utterly enchanted.



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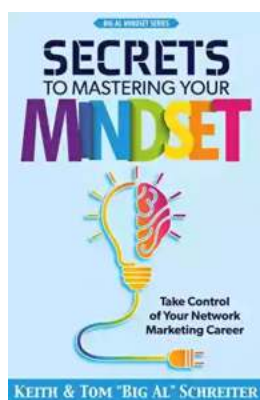
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Have you ever wanted to travel the Kings Highway in Jordan and walk down the famous Siq Gorge to the ancient city of Petra? Or wanted to spend an Orthodox Christmas in Bethlehem? Wondered how you would feel if stuck with a flat tyre in the middle of the Sudanese desert at sunrise? Or pondered about the Call to Prayer as it echoes repeatedly across Istanbul at sunset? Have you ever wondered how so many people live and survive in the Middle East without the rules and regulations of western building, working, and plumbing?

Meet Shazam the Jordanian taxi driver, the boys in the Sea of Shoeshine, Mr Ali and his famous Green Door Pizza in Jerusalem, Russell from Noosa, and the Great Paperweights of Giza as you travel on a journey of adventure, mishaps, revelations, architectural wonders, and lack of plumbing, though Israel, Egypt, Jordan and Turkey. And dont forget the Cats of Istanbul, the Cairo Cat Shop, and Camel School and the Art of Haggling .

In 1997, architect Mahalath Halperin, together with her colleague and his wife, Peter and Pauline Buckwell, spent four crazy weeks travelling by plane, train, and automobile throughout the Middle East on a journey to discover architecture, culture, and of course, plumbing. And they found lots of cats along the way. This is the story of that adventure.



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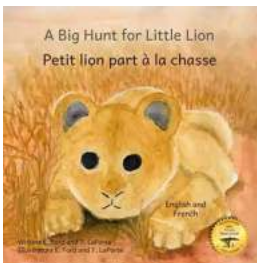
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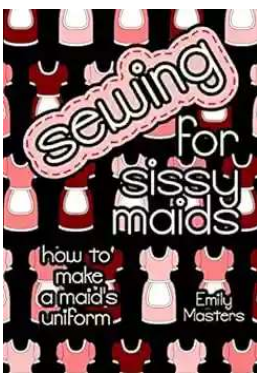
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