

Citytellers

ODS venue trio; 2 Palaces and a Church

I assume most of you have read or heard about Paul Auster's New York Trilogy...Beside being usually interpreted as a detective fiction, my memories call the series as the exposition of a city through the author's mysteriously narrated investigation of "self" and identity.

In case of Istanbul and apart from ordinary talks, there are moments in which we inevitably keep our silence and let the city narrate herself...knowing precisely that any single touch would ruin that moment. There are some other cases, where we intentionally create the bridge between Istanbul and our clients via the most spectacular treasures of this city.

Our venue trio consists of 2 Palaces and a Church; appreciated and used as exclusive venues for special events by our project managers. In that sense, if you wish you might also call this an "ODS Trilogy".

Hagia Irene ; A classy and remarkable welcome

The Byzantine church of "Divine Peace" is located in the outer courtyard of Topkapi Palace. It ranks as the first church built in Constantinople by the Roman emperor Constantine I in the 4th century. It served as the church of the Patriarchate before Hagia Sophia was built. The galleries and the church was used as an arsenal during the Ottoman Era. Today, Hagia Eirene hosts Istanbul Art, Culture and Music Festivals and Istanbul Biennials. It is open to public only during the festival, concert and biennial times.

HP Top Managers greet and applause their Top Achievers worldwide at the entrance of St. Irene accompanied with the Ottoman tunes of the "Janisary Band". Following this tasteful entrance, our guests first enjoy their drinks within the venerable walls of St. Irene and then witness one of the most graceful performance that could ever be hosted in this home for "Divine Peace"; Whirling Derwiches Ceremony. After the Top Achievers' Awards are presented, dinner is served inside a tent, built in the garden of St.Irene. A passage to the after hours of the night inside St. Irene's gallery section is this time achieved by the relaxing moves of the belly dancer...or maybe by the party music resonating through the gallery walls.



Palais De France opens its doors first time for an outside event

The French Palace had been the first diplomatic representative of France until the Ambassador have been moved to Ankara and today it still serves as the residence of the French Ambassador in Istanbul. Dating back to 1839, this building is often interpreted as one of the most significant witness of the relations between Turkey and France for more than five hundred years.

This year, together with the first blossoms of spring, the Palace opened its doors for TOTAL's Senior Management Dinner Event. As surprising as the realization of this event for our guests was also the attendance of the French Ambassador Paul Poudade and Ilber Ortayli, famous historian and current director of Topkapi Palace. 270 managers enjoyed the enchanting atmosphere of *Palais De France* together with the excellent taste and quality of Ritz Carlton catering service.



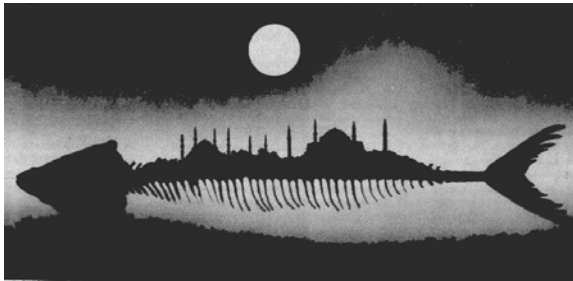
Ciragan Palace; symbol of "Love for Music & Flowers"

In the 17th century the Besiktas seashore, where the Ciragan Palace is located, was known as the "Kazancioglu Gardens" and the palaces built along the seashore and these gardens were interpreted as the symbol of love for music and flowers. There is no doubt that this interpretation belongs to the riotous living period called "Tulip Period" of the Ottoman times. Building the first mansion here for his wife Fatma Sultan in 1719, Ibrahim Pasha loved to organize torchlight festivals called "Ciragan Festivals" (Ciragan means "light" in Persian) and as a result people have started calling this area "Ciragan".

Today we organize gala dinners, welcome receptions, special evenings in the very same gardens of the Ciragan Palace...and very recently GE Presidents Club Gala Dinner has taken place in this graceful structure echoing its essence from the past.



Not only a story of Tellers & Sellers



It is not only us telling about cities...and trying to sell these cities to our clients as "dream destinations", it is also the city itself narrating a different story through each and every structure, monument, coastline, palace, bazaar, museum, hotel, restaurant ...etc., and sometimes re-writing each and every single moment in history.

And the joy for us lies in the moment beyond time, where we finally meet the smile on our clients' faces through each heavenly turn of a Whirling Dervish in the Byzantine Church of "Divine Peace", toasting their glasses in the garden of a Palace which has been the home of a great empire, where they have been invited for becoming top achievers of their high technology company worldwide.



I would like to leave you with an interesting exhibition going on at Istanbul Modern (Museum of Modern Art) called "Design Cities":

"Design Cities tells the story of contemporary design through the focus of seven key cities, in each case looking at their decisive roles in the development of design. While focusing on how specific moments in the history of cities contributed to the evolution of design, the exhibition investigates the ways in which design has shaped contemporary culture." (for more information please visit www.istanbulmodern.org)

