

# Turkish delights

***Tuba Satana, a local food and travel blogger, selects her favourite food hotspots across the country***

PHOTOGRAPHY TUBA SATANA

**T**URKEY HAS everything from sizzling street food to fantastic fine dining. It

may vary across the country – they eat green food in the north and red in the south – but one important factor remains constant: the superb quality.

In Istanbul, Turkey's largest city, you can expect to find local specialties such as *simit* (circular bread with sesame seeds), roasted chestnuts and boiled corn. Istanbul's streets smell of freshly baked bread, *pide* (stuffed flatbread) and *borek* (a thin pastry filled with cheese or minced meat), and is brought to life by dazzling open markets, home to butchers, fishmongers and spice shops.

You'll also find some of the city's most wonderful food in unpretentious tradesmen's restaurants, with an emphasis on home-cooked meals and stews. For me, the best food is cooked at home, so if you're lucky enough to be invited to a family dinner, accept immediately.

The even more adventurous should look out for the delicacy *kokoreç* (lamb's intestines cooked on charcoal), which is served from a cart leaving the most seductive smell in its wake. But if all that sounds like too much trouble, delicious *döner* stands, *lahmacun* (pizza-thin dough with meat) shops and kebab houses are easily found dotted throughout Turkey.

Hungry? Let's dig into a selection of the tastiest treats across the country... →





**SPICE WORLD**  
Dried peppers waiting  
to be filled with rice,  
mince meat and  
spices in Gaziantep



## TURKEY

### ISTANBUL

You can sample cuisine from the whole of Turkey here, but for great local cooking, head to Kantin (30 Akkavak Sokağı, +90 212 219 3114, [kantin.biz](http://kantin.biz)) in the fashionable Nişantaşı district for lunch and Lokanta Maya (35A Kemankes Caddesi, +90 212 252 6884, [lokantamaya.blogspot.com](http://lokantamaya.blogspot.com)) at Karaköy – where the menu is seasonal and changes daily – for dinner. The tradesmen's restaurant, Şahin Lokantası (11A Orhan Adli Apaydın Sk, Beyoğlu, +90 212 244 2543) is also recommended for traditional fare.

Seafood lovers should make a beeline for Balıkçı Sabahattin (1 Seyit Hasan Kuyu Sokak, Cankurtaran, +90 212 458 1824, [balikcisabahattin.com](http://balikcisabahattin.com)) and Giritli (Keresteci Hakkı Sokak, Armada Otel Yanı, Cankurtaran, +90 212 458 2270, [giritlirestoran.com](http://giritlirestoran.com)) in Eminönü, a peninsula steeped in history.

You can't leave Istanbul without sampling a *meyhane* or traditional Turkish bar that also serves *mezze* – and the street Asmalı Cavit, in Beyoğlu, is filled with them. And for the best Turkish delight – known as *lokum* – in the city, Şekerci Cafer Erol ([sekercafererol.com](http://sekercafererol.com)) has been serving the sweet for four generations. →



**GETTING A BIT SAUCY**  
Gaziantep's famous tomato, lettuce and green pepper salad with a secret blend of spices is served in restaurants at lunch



**GET STUFFED**  
You'll find *pide*, a Turkish flatbread, pictured here filled with ricotta, parsley and butter, at most of Istanbul's bakeries



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**TO MARKET, TO MARKET**  
Red carrots are just some of the fresh, seasonal fruit and veg you can pick up at Bodrum's Milas market

## İZMİR

Locals here start their days with *boyoz*, a pastry largely sold on the streets of İzmir. Served plain is the favourite, but they also come filled with meat, cheese or spinach. If there's any room left, try a *kumru*, a warm sandwich stuffed with loads of charcuterie and cheese from trendy Şevki (9 Cengiz Topel Cad, +90 232 330 8600), at Karşıyaka. The sautéed liver at Cigerci Zarif (67 Şehit Fethi Bey Bulvarı, Pasaport, +90 232 445 7526) must also be eaten to be believed.

## BODRUM

Visit the local food markets in and around Bodrum, Yalıkavak,

and Milas and you'll discover exciting seasonal fruit, vegetables, olive oil, olives, homemade cheeses, bread, and wild, green edible herbs.

Kortan Restaurant (32 Cumhuriyet Cad, +90 252 316 1300, [kortanrestaurant.com](http://kortanrestaurant.com)) overlooking Bodrum Castle has been serving excellent fish and seafood for over 30 years.

And if a night of dancing at the open-air Küba Bar (Neyzen Tevfik Cad, +90 252 313 4450) has whetted your appetite, Liman Köftecisi (172 Neyzen Tevfik Caddesi, Western Bay, +90 252 316 5060) is the place to go for a *kofta* and a glass of *rakı* (the local, anise-flavoured spirit) by the seafront. →

### TURKISH PIE

*Borek*, a thin pastry that can be filled with cheese, minced meat or vegetables, is a popular snack all over Turkey



## TURKEY



WANT CHILLI SAUCE?  
It's a doner kebab, but not  
as you know it back home

### MARMARIS AND FETHIYE

The best way to start your day in Marmaris is to take a boat cruise, diving into the inviting turquoise sea.

Having worked up a sailor's appetite, drop anchor at Liman Restaurant (40 Sokak 38, +90 252 412 6336) inside the Turkish bazaar for fine soup and *buğulama* (steamed fish), or visit Kordon Balık Restaurant (56 Yaşar Aytac Sok, +90 252 243 5251) – known as İsmail Usta'nın Yeri – where great ingredients are the key. Tranquil, beautiful Fethiye is also a haven for food lovers. For starters, you'll never have your fill of the heavenly slipper lobster pasta at Osman'ın Yeri



**HOT FROM THE OVEN**  
A local baker serves up  
*lahmacun*, the Turkish  
equivalent of pizza,  
in Gaziantep

(Kaya Köyü Turunç Pınarı Mevki, +90 542 262 1879).

The wholesale market hall is also a trendy place to visit and eyeball the daily catch.

And make sure you don't miss out on those roadside *gözleme* stalls, for delicious herb and cheese-filled dough layers, cooked on special metal plates.

### ANTALYA

For a real taste of Antalya, pop into Şişçi Ramazan'ın Yeri (44 Yener Ulusoy Bulvarı, +90 242 242 6637) and sample some delicious *köfte* and tahini *piyaz* (salad). Have a sweet tooth? Why not finish your meal with a caramelised milk ice cream at Zamora (55 Cebesoy Cd, +90 242 322 3632). →





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## KALKAN - THE JEWEL OF TURKEY'S TURQUOISE COAST

About Kalkan...

Just 110km west of Dalaman airport lies KALKAN, a charming small harbour town, nestled at the foot of the Taurus mountains in a beautiful bay. Once a small fishing village, the heart of the town is preserved in its Old Quarter, with its quaint Greek and Turkish houses descending in small street to the pretty harbour and to the sea.

And what a sea! With a Blue Flag award for cleanliness KALKAN is ideal for swimming and all types of water sports. For holiday makers there are many historical and natural beauty sites in the immediate area including the famous 17km sandy beach at Patara. Evenings in KALKAN are laid back affairs, with an amazing choice of roof terrace and harbour restaurants serving a high standard of Turkish and international cuisine.

Quite simply put - KALKAN is rather unique. A friendly, cosmopolitan and sophisticated town that has a special atmosphere all of its own. Our visitors return time and time again, saying they have 'fallen in love' with the town and its people.



**KALKAN LUXURY APARTMENTS:** Just completed is this stunning new development of two and three bedroom luxury apartments located overlooking Kalkan Bay. Choose from a three bedroom two bathroom apartment with private terrace, or two bedroom two bathroom duplex apartment with private balcony and roof terrace. Just three apartments share an amazing infinity pool, gardens and off road parking. Luxury marble floors and bathrooms. Fully furnished as shown and air conditioned.

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## TURKEY

### ANTIOCH

Sample local delicacies such as *kaymaz böreği* (savoury pastry with minced meat) and *kağıt kebabi* (oven-roasted lamb with cheese) at Sultan Sofrası (20A İstiklal Cad, +90 326 213 8759, [sultansofrası.com](http://sultansofrası.com)).

For dessert, order a *künefe* (a vermicelli-like pastry with a sweet cheese filling) at Çınaraltı (90 Carsi Cad, Kuzguncuk, +90 216 553 7385) or a *haytalı* (a flour pudding-based dessert served with ice cream and rose water) at Affan Kahvesi (42 Kurtulus Caddesi, +90 326 215 1248, [affankahvesi.com](http://affankahvesi.com)) while watching the local men playing backgammon or reading papers.

### GAZİANTEP

Start your day bright and early around 6am with a *cartlak kebabi* (liver kebab grilled on charcoal) at Cartlak kebabi, Ali Haydar Usta (Köprübaşı Sk. Kaleatı, Şahinbey). Alternatively, for something sweeter – and more western – at that hour, a *katmer* (hand-stretched dough filled with pistachio, sugar and butter) from Zekeriya Usta (16C/D Çukur Mh. Körükcü Sok. B Hilmi Gecidi, +90 342 230 09 71, [katmercizekeriya.com](http://katmercizekeriya.com)) will surely hit the spot.

Gaziantep is also renowned for its spicy tomato salads and divine *baklava*. Stock up on the latter at Koçak (Budak Mah, 3 Şehit Mehmet Özgil Sok, +90 342 321 0519, [kocakbaklava.com](http://kocakbaklava.com)) to bring a taste of Turkey back home with you. [TC](#)

### GETTING THERE

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**NICE TO MEAT YOU**  
A plate of freshly grilled *kebabi* is dished up at Ali Haydar Usta in Gaziantep

**CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD**  
Food is not the only thing to indulge in at Affan Kahvesi in Antioch – you'll also spot locals playing backgammon



READ TUBA'S BLOG AT [ISTANBULFOOD.COM](http://ISTANBULFOOD.COM)