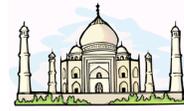


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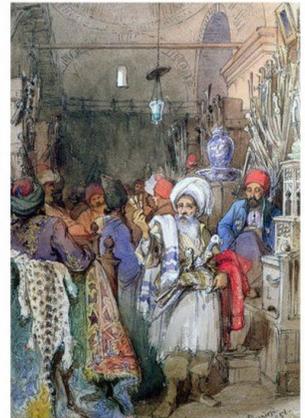
Fantastic Places of the World

Grand Bazaar of Istanbul



One of my least known hobbies is buying unusual items from various parts of the globe. So, it is not strange to find me prowling around the Grand Bazaar of Istanbul, Turkey. It is one of the largest and oldest markets of the world, and one of my favorites. For me, it is the best place in the city to find handicraft items, paintings, furniture, jewelry, and clothes.

About 20,000 people work in the Grand Bazaar every day, which is a high number of jobs in this big city. Although the market lives mainly off tourism, many of the Istanbulites, people who live in Istanbul, shop there daily.



When you visit for the first time, it is very easy to get lost because it has more than three thousand stores grouped and distributed around 64 streets. One should not forget that skilled pickpockets are also walking around the Grand Bazaar and can steal your wallet in a very quiet, subtle way.

Language is not usually a problem. Since many of the merchants make their living from tourism, they know several languages perfectly. In fact, they can easily distinguish what country you are from and what language you speak without you even saying one word. Keep in mind that the star language

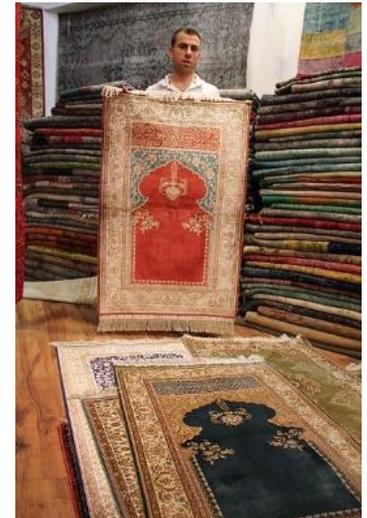
there is "money", and that haggling over the exorbitant prices that they try to charge you is typical. To avoid getting cheated, it is important to know how to negotiate and above all have a lot of patience, since on many occasions the haggling can last hours.



My favorite section of the Grand Bazaar is the fabric workshops, where carpets, curtains, cushions, and other household items hang everywhere to display the merchandise. If you are lucky, they will allow you to go into the backroom where workers are weaving by hand using the same techniques from thousands of years ago. The last time I was there I bought a carpet for the living room. The seller who took care of me assured me that I was holding a magic carpet, which would allow me to receive my deepest wishes. I really didn't believe it was magic, he just wanted to charge more money than I was willing to pay. Even so, in the end we reached an agreement and the beautiful carpet looks wonderful in my house. Who knows, perhaps one day I will discover it is magic. Meanwhile, my dog, Sultan, loves to sit on it on chilly winter days.



Other areas of the bazaar that you should not miss are the sections with lamps, jewelry, spices, sweets, and leather goods or the section with paintings and furniture. These traditional craftsmen have a very special way of displaying things.



I hope I can go back there soon! Güle güle!
(Turkish for bye bye)



ANSWER THE QUESTIONS

1. What does the expression "money" is the star language mean?

- a. That they speak several languages in Turkey
- b. That what is most important is having bills or currency to pay for things
- c. That it is good to have an economy as strong as the dollar
- d. That they don't understand all the languages of the world

2. The Istanbulites are _____.

- a. Small and thin people
- b. Rich inhabitants who buy many things in the Grand Bazaar
- c. The inhabitants of Istanbul
- d. People who love to shop in the market



3. Why is bargaining important?

- a. Because that's how you can increase the price of what was agreed
- b. Because that's how you compete with money
- c. Because you don't want to buy anything cheap
- d. Because you don't want to pay the first price being asked



5. To go to the Grand Bazaar you have to _____

- a. Always go hand in hand with an adult
- b. Take a taxi because it is very large
- c. Carry a lot of money
- d. All answers are wrong



6. Güle güle in the text means ...

- a. Adiós adiós
- b. Bye bye
- c. Nice to meet you
- d. Both a and b are correct



7. Would it be easy for someone to steal from you in the Grand Bazaar? Yes or No? Why?

8. Write 5 sentences describing what product you would like to buy at the Grand Bazaar and why. _____
