

# 16 Istanbul Museum



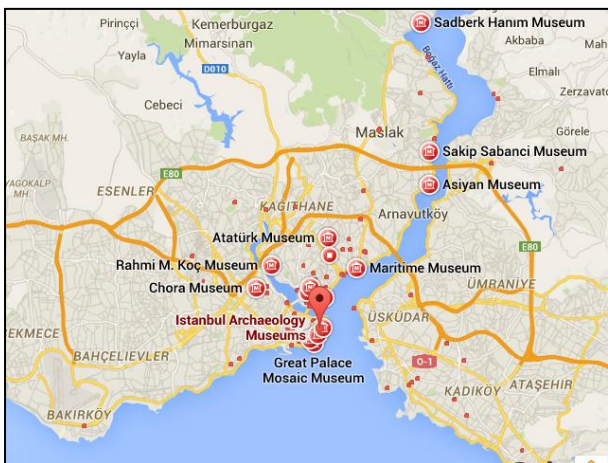
## Location/Description

The Istanbul Archaeology Museums (Turkish: İstanbul Arkeoloji Müzeleri) is a group of three archaeological museums located in the Eminönü district of Istanbul, Turkey, near Gülhane Park and Topkapı Palace.

The Istanbul Archaeology Museums consists of three museums:

1. Archaeological Museum (main building)
2. Museum of the Ancient Orient
3. Museum of Islamic Art (in the Tiled Kiosk).

It houses over one million objects that represent almost all of the eras and civilizations in world history.



## Brief history

The site of the museums belonged to the Topkapı Palace outer gardens. The museum was founded by decree as the Imperial Museum in 1891. The first curator and founder of the museum was Osman Hamdi Bey. Since an imperial decree protecting cultural goods in the Ottoman Empire was enforced, many governors from the provinces would send in found artefacts to the capital city. In that way the museum was able to amass a great collection. Upon its 100th anniversary in 1991, the museum received the European Council Museum Award, particularly for the renovations made to the lower floor halls in the main building and the new displays in the other buildings.

The construction of the main building was started by Osman Hamdi Bey in 1881, attaining its present neo-Greek form in 1908. The facade of the building was inspired by the Alexander Sarcophagus and Sarcophagus of the Mourning Women, both housed inside the Museum. It is one of the prominent structures built in the neoclassical style in Istanbul.

The Museum of the Ancient Orient was commissioned by Osman Hamdi Bey in 1883 as a fine arts school. Then it was reorganised as a museum, which opened in 1935. It was closed to visitors in 1963, and reopened in 1974 after restoration works on the interior.

The Tiled Kiosk was commissioned by Sultan Mehmed II in 1472. It is one of the oldest structures in Istanbul featuring Ottoman civil architecture, and was a part of the Topkapı Palace outer gardens. It was used as the Imperial Museum between 1875 and 1891 before the collection moved to the newly constructed main building. It was opened to public in 1953 as a museum of Turkish and Islamic art, and was later incorporated into the Istanbul Archaeology Museum.

## Scripturally related exhibits

### Old Testament

2 Kings 20:20; 2 Chron. 32:3-4

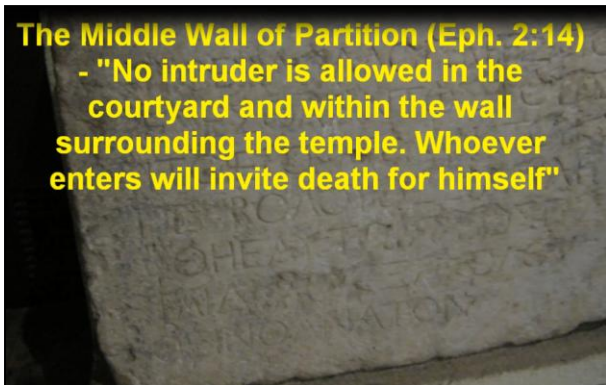
The Istanbul Museum houses the Shiloah (Siloam) inscription. It is a passage of inscribed text found in the Hezekiah tunnel which brings water from the Gihon Spring to the Pool of Siloam, located in the City of David in East Jerusalem neighborhood of Shiloah or "Silwan".

The tunnel was discovered in 1838 by Edward Robinson. Despite Hezekiah's tunnel being examined extensively during the 19th century by Robinson, Charles Wilson, and Charles Warren, they all missed discovering the inscription, probably due to the accumulated mineral deposits making it barely noticeable. According to Easton's Bible Dictionary, in 1880 a youth wading up Hezekiah's tunnel from the Siloam Pool end discovered the inscription cut in the rock on the eastern side, about 19 feet into the tunnel. The inscription was surreptitiously cut from the wall of the tunnel in 1891 and broken into fragments which were recovered through the efforts of the British Consul in Jerusalem and placed in the Istanbul Archaeology Museum.

### ***New Testament***

Ephesians 2:14

One important exhibit is the sign on the middle wall of partition in the temple in Jerusalem of Christ's day referred to by Paul in Eph. 2:14.



### **Sources:**

Wikipedia

Google Maps

2010 “In the steps of the Patriarchs” tour

(Compiler – Jim Cowie)