

28 - Istanbul is a blessing to the eyes - Easy Italian Vlog [Free Transcripts] A2/B2

Hi everyone, and welcome to this new video where I'll show you my trip to Istanbul. As usual, I'd like to remind you that in the description of my videos, you'll find a link to my website, where you can find transcripts of my content—vlogs, podcasts, and stories. These bilingual transcripts are free; turn on the Italian subtitles and enjoy the video.

One thing that stands out about Istanbul is the fishermen who line the waterfront to fish. And right now I'm standing under one of the bridges—look, can you see the fishing rods dangling down? Look at all those fishing rods hanging there. Sometimes, when you're standing here near these restaurants, one of these fishermen will cast his line and it'll hit you. It's really funny.

Look at the jellyfish. I hope you can see it. When you come to Istanbul at night, you get the impression that the city never sleeps because ferries cross the Bosphorus—or rather, the Sea of Marmara—until late at night. And then there are the colorful lights from the boats, the mosques, the shops, and the restaurants—it's incredible. Look, this is the bridge under which I showed you the fishing rods, and you can see the fishermen up there. It's a pastime: they sit there for hours, chatting and drinking hot tea. The other day I saw a huge 2-liter thermos.

The ferries—those big boats that carry passengers—keep crossing the sea, and even as the boats pass by, these fishermen don't take their fishing rods out of the water, which I find very strange. This is another one of those very large boats. Do you see the hotel's name? MOMENTO—meaning “the moment”—right now.

Ever since I started making videos, I've been wondering how much I'm actually living in the moment and how much I'm just filming the moment, because I never plan my videos too much—I just film whatever comes my way. But it's also true that when I watch my videos at home or on YouTube, I remember these moments and maybe notice things I hadn't seen while I was filming. Does that happen to you, too? Some Turks say that in this part of Istanbul, you don't hear Turkish being spoken, just foreign languages. I can confirm that I heard a lot of Arabic, Russian, English, and German.

Now I'm going to show you something typical of Istanbul: the basket filled with food or whatever people need. Basically, people on the upper floors lower a rope with a wicker basket—usually—and their friends and family members put food inside it; if it's a restaurant, they put kitchen supplies in it, like flour or corn. Now, as soon as the lady at the restaurant lets me film it, I'll show it to you.

The restaurant staff let me go outside into their courtyard, and from here I'll be able to film the basket as it comes down. Probably, since the houses here are small, the restaurants have part of their kitchen on the upper floor. Do you see that green rope? The people working on the first

floor of the restaurant pull the rope, which rings that bell, so the people upstairs look out—that is, they come out and ask what you need. In this case, the kitchen asked for an omelet, so the omelet will arrive shortly. Do you see the tray? Look: they've taken it, and the lady has gone back inside.

Now I'm about to head to the Galata Tower, which is one of Istanbul's landmarks and is also a tower linked to Italian history, particularly to the Genoese. There's a different price for Turkish citizens and tourists, but sometimes the information is a bit confusing. For example, it says there that only the Turkish lira is accepted, but then there are some prices listed in euros.

Sometimes the difference between the price for Turks and for tourists is very large. Here it's actually 10 times higher for tourists—from 60 lire to 900 lire—more than 10 times, almost 14 times as much. Incredible. In Italy, there isn't this kind of difference. The only difference is between the price for tourists of all nationalities (adults) and students, who get a discount. I just won this game on the easy mode, where you had to answer questions about the city.

Unfortunately, you can't go into these narrow alleys, but the view is magnificent. Here's a model of the city. From the tower, you can even see a wedding—or at least it looks like a wedding. The bride is wearing orange, and someone is taking pictures of a little girl. This is the view from one of the windows. Over there is Topkapi Palace; as usual, there's a flag—can you see it? And the houses climbing over one another and up the hill.

As an Italian, when I see these streets full of tourists, I'd be tempted to think they're just for pedestrians, but that's not the case—there aren't any pedestrian-only streets here, or at least I haven't seen one yet, and to me that's incredible. I'd even say it's absurd.

There are tons of tourists from all sorts of different countries. I'm probably not even the only Italian here. Now I'm going to climb this spiral staircase, which twists around itself. These staircases are built when there's limited space to make the most of what's available. The blue ceiling. We step out onto the outdoor balcony, and an incredible view of the city opens up before us.

This balcony is absolutely packed, and the guard who checked our tickets made us wait while a few people were getting off, so there's a limit on how many people can go up—but that doesn't really work because all the tourists stop on the balcony to kiss, take pictures, and admire the view, which is only natural.

Do you see the police car with its flashing sirens? Istanbul, being a very, very busy city, can sometimes seem a bit unsafe, but among the crowds or among the food vendors and other sellers, there are plainclothes police officers, and if you shout "help," they'll rush over immediately because tourists also attract criminals—that is, people who want to scam others.

In the end, that's not a wedding, but a photo studio. And the photo studio offers you this terrace with a panoramic view, provides the outfits you rent for the session, and even sets out small

dishes of food for the seagulls that gather there—so you can take your photo in this very beautiful, even unique, atmosphere, I'd say. It's an interesting kind of business.

When they built this tower in 528, they probably didn't think about tall people like me, but as you can see, it's very difficult to get down. Look, this is a map from 1520 made by Giovanni Andrea Varvassore—Vavassore, sorry. And there are parts in Italian, like “Castel Novo where Fla is and the treasure of the Grand Turk,” or “Porta Liona and Arsenale,” or even “the place where most of the Turkish galleys are,” meaning warships, I suppose.

Look at this photo: the simit vendors—which are like bagels—and the Galata Tower. And this photo is from 1850. Imagine this: about 10 years after the invention of photography, from the Galata Tower, a Turkish proto-aviator launched himself after building wings inspired by the flight of birds—though, of course, it didn't work—and now they've created this animation.

The game involves you standing there and following the on-screen instructions. Look, we're basically flying. Where are we going? I don't know. Are we crashing, or are we supposed to soar into the sky? Ah, it's not clear. And in fact, I started playing before reading the instructions and learning about the life of Hezârfen Ahmed Çelebi, this early aviator—a sort of Turkish Leonardo da Vinci.

Near the harbor here, people throw a lot of fish into the sea, and the seagulls swarm in, filling the sky. Look how many there are. Now I'll show you the typical tray used to serve tea, because tea here is very cheap, and people stop by, relax, chat, meet up, and drink tea—also because they often can't meet at home, you see? The tray has these three metal arms, and it makes it easier to carry the tea without spilling a drop—it's all about balance.

Bye, I hope you enjoyed this video. As usual, I'll remind you that you'll find a link in the description of everything I post on YouTube.