

The Most Relaxing Places to Unwind with a Drink in Istanbul

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The call to prayer played in the distance as the Bosphorus glowed with the last light of the day. I had been walking through Istanbul's maze streets, through centuries old mosques and lively bazaars, but now it's time to rest, to sip, and to lay back in the magic city that divides two continents. Here are where I found the four best places to wind down with a drink.

Mikla

The elevator ride up felt like stepping into a Star Wars planet. As I stepped onto the terrace of Mikla, the city screamed its horns beneath me, with the Galata Tower standing tall, the Bosphorus stretching over the horizon, and the tops of the mosques in the Sultanahmet glowing in the distance. I ordered a Raki Sour, an herbal flavored drink swirling in the ice as the evening breeze carried the scent of the sea. This was Istanbul when it's feeling its finest, the atmosphere elegant, the music soothing.

Alexandra Cocktail Bar

As I weaved through the narrow, historic streets of Arnavutköy, I saw colorful Ottoman mansions lining up on the waterfront. Inside Alexandra Cocktail Bar, the lighting was low and relaxing, and the chatter was more intimate. My bartender shook up a sophisticated cocktail I had never had before, a Pomegranate Negroni. From the rooftop, I watched the Bosphorus wrap around the shore, yachts floating by lazily. This was where it felt like time slowed down.

Sortie

Maybe relaxation for you means dancing under the stars, that's how I like to end my night. In that case, go to Sortie. It's set right next to the water in Kuruçeşme, where Istanbul's elite come to sip champagne and celebrate into the night. I started with a refreshing Mojito, the mint crisp, and lime tart. As the DJ took over, the terrace turned into a celebration of the city's electric energy. The Bosphorus Bridge glowed with its neon lights, and it almost felt like the whole world was there, moving to the rhythm of Istanbul.

16 Roof

As the night wound down, I found myself at 16 Roof, set on top of the Swissotel. The city sparkled below, with a mix of golden lights. I settled into a luxury chair with a Turkish inspired "Old Fashioned," infused with a touch of fig and cinnamon. The music was smooth, the air crisp, and the view? Breathtaking.

Whether it's a quiet cocktail with a view, a Turkish gathering filled with culture, or dancing all night under the stars, whatever your vibe, Istanbul has a place for every kind of drink and person. The city whispers a different language with every sip. I listened to it, will you?