

MY TURKEY ADVENTURE

Written by :

Julius who is always green

Proofread by :

Mimi, still possessing the talking ability

To my dearest mom n dad, and my two lovely sisters

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This little adventure of mine was actually written almost a year ago, well-preserved in my rusty blog. Nevertheless the blog is now deserted; no one's coming to pay a visit and I don't intend to give it a little touch up or update. I'm kind of afraid if the memorable nostalgia will just fade away hence I came up with this idea of putting the memories together in a creative way so that it won't perish till the very end of time.

By the way, I keep laughing out loud when thinking on this acknowledgement section; this isn't a masterpiece, not a novel yet I could not stop writing one for I'd love to dedicate even a tiny piece of my work to the important ones that surround me with their aura of love.

I'd like to dedicate this little piece of my work to :

KakMinci, YM absentee that I miss, life has become a bit dull

BigK, I won't be meeting you for another year

Aizat Gadi, today is your birthday and remind me to bake you a cake

Hedaya, I long for your home-made tart

My brothers and sisters in Irbid, Malaysia or anywhere across the globe

And to **my little one**, **kakM**, and **adek**, whose camaraderie sings a nice melody in my heart

And lastly to **Nad**, a true friend that can never be replaced

PROLOGUE

The atmosphere has suddenly become tense and I have unexpectedly turned into an edgy and jittery guy these past few weeks. My Obstetric and Gynecology rotation has almost reached its end which means that the OSCE Exam will take place in no time. I haven't yet started revising the whole 8-week materials but that's part of a medical student's life. A flying color banner will soar high up into the sky of victory if they are keen to put up fights and challenges against the calamity and catastrophe of the medical world. Well, I'm about to begin my first fight and it's the vacation. Well, going on a vacation is divine after weeks of strenuous and tiring life in Jordan but that's life. LOL

My plan was just as stated below :

- 1) Board on the flight at 430 am Jordan local time
- 2) Arrival at Atarturk Internatonal Airport 730 am
- 3) Board on the metro train to Otogar Bus Station, take another city bus to the Taksim Square
- 4) Meet up my sisters somewhere near the Hyatt, here we've 2 plans
 - a) ~~Spend the whole 3 days in Istanbul, go out for the islands nearby~~
 - b) Travel out to Bolu, halfway between Ankara and Istanbul
- 5) Rent a car if plan b is chosen
- 6) Board of the flight to Amman, Sunday night at 11
- 7) Arrival scheduled at 4.00 am Monday morning

Honestly, I would say that vacation is just like the surfactant released by pneumocytes type two; it reduces the surface tension of the alveoli and the lungs will somehow work more efficiently. The same thing applies here where vacation soothes your uptight feelings down and it clears up any cloudy days you've been experiencing lately. As many of the illnesses are nowadays related to the interaction between stress, environments, and the way of life, I wonder if the medical doctors could somehow try to prescribe vacations instead of medications. LOL

PART ONE

A myth will usually stand on some firm basis and it is once said that if you stand between the Blue Mosque and Hagia Sophia of Istanbul exactly at 12 noon, you may once again see them. Hey don't get any wrong idea, I'm not superstitious. It's just that myth may sometimes augment one's concentration and interest. And this is the very beginning of my 3-day- journey tale to the cradle of civilization, Istanbul.

Being a second time traveler in this two-continent country, I was not that eager to get to Istanbul but what anticipated me the most was the autumn itself. The memory of summer 2004 kept lingering in my mind as I boarded on Turkish Airways. The captain had started to announce the flight and my mind slowly began to float in the muddled reminiscence of my previous visit in Turkey. It was one peaceful moment until somehow I was awakened by the screeching sound of the tires as it safely landed on Ataturk International Airport. I fell asleep throughout the trip and at this very moment I was one energetic guy, ready for another journeys and adventures.

No sooner did I exit the Ataturk International Airport than, a wall of thin cold mist hit me on the face. Everything seemed fuzzy and blurry, including my thoughts and mind. My first mission was a simple one. I've got to take a ride to Taksim



Square where my sisters would be waiting inside of the hotel. It took like 5 minutes before I faced the first challenge - language. The Turks conversed neither in English nor Arabic and it was a fortune that I was quite skilled in

sign language. I boarded on the airport bus heading to Taksim square and the one-hour trip was never tedious as I saw autumn leaves mounted up on the grounds along the journey, adding to the picturesque beauty of the scenery.

I had once declared to Ijat-kun that I've been blessed with a sixth sense and I was damn right. Here in Taksim Square, my feet magically continued on walking as I stepped out of the bus, heading to the southern part of the square where I began to squeeze in the small streets looking for Kenvansaray Hotel. I turned right and left for like several dozens of times and to my relief, the hotel proudly towered up in front of me after like 20 minutes of walking. After getting connected to my sister's line via the receptionist, they went down for check-out and their bags were like inflated with rempah ratus and santans of mine, arranged neatly in their bags. LOL.

Bolu or Bursa? Two tough choices but we chose Bursa after discussing the pros and cons. We rented the smallest car from a rent-a-car office nearby, a



pristine white Hyundai Getz and we started on the journey to the enchanted Bursa after getting a map and directions from a friendly Turk. The safest and fastest way was via ferry boat and we headed off to the jetty nearby, climbing in the huge yet speedy

ferry-boat. The raging wind created gigantic waves and the ferry was like buoyed in accordance to the rhythm of the wave. Fortunately, I am one lucky guy for not having any motion sicknesses. If not, I would have to swallow up a tablet of hyocine to enjoy the panoramic view of the Bosphorus strait. Maps were in our hands as we arrived safely at Yalova. We began searching for the directions but it didn't hurt. After all, it was a vacation.

Fine meadows greeted us as we drove along the side hill. We encountered one vast lake, reflecting nature's emerald green and the indigo sky like a giant mirror. The myriad hues and fragrance of the pine trees enveloped us and the air was refreshingly



cool. We got into one of the hotels in Bursa after the two-hour exhilarating journey. We retired early that night considering that our real journey would begin early in the morning (the next day). As the surroundings were engulfed in utter darkness and stillness, we finally dozed off...

PART TWO

It was one fine day as I peered through the clouded windows. Another day of our journey would soon begin. Breakfasting like a king and 2 queens, we filled our tummies up to the max as it would be one unpredictable crossing. It was heavenly as



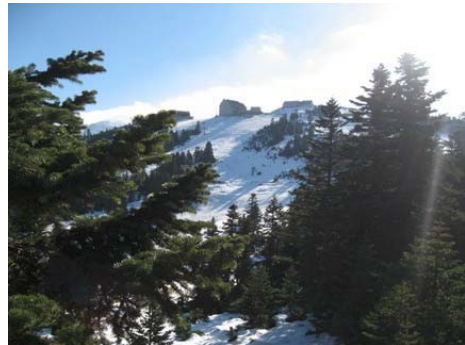
we stepped out of the hotel. Birds were gleefully dancing in the midair. They flew hither and thither, chirping and twittering over and over again as if they were waving us adieu. The streets were empty with no cars racing side by side and we hit the road no sooner than finding Uludag, the Legendary Mount Olympus on the map.



The temperature dropped down as we climbed higher and luckily the car's heater performed an excellent job in maintaining the warmth inside. How long it would take to hit the highest point, we had no idea. We kept on driving and the road had obviously become smaller but it didn't matter. The overwhelmingly breathtaking vista counterbalanced unenthusiastic sides of the journey. The sun poked its hand through the clouds and the sunshine harmoniously blended in together with the autumn leaves, creating a lively and vibrant panorama. For like hundred of times we pulled the car to a stop so that we could enjoy these inspiring moments. I did wonder, when the leaves are gone, does the love disappear?

Snowfall in autumn is never impossible and as we ascended higher up, snows began to pile up on those autumn leaves and it was really cool. I had to stay on gear 1, 2 and rarely 3 as the road had become more slippery and slimy. One hour was gone but we hadn't still reached the destination. Sigh~ but talking of the devil, one enormous and gargantuan figure caught our eyes. As we drove closer it pompously loomed in front of us, showing off its striking white coat. The signboard showed like 1865 m and yeay, the legendary Mount Olympus had finally accepted us to be its blessed guests.

Clouds like pure white cotton balls dotted the brilliant sky and the air was crystal clear. I was at loss for words to describe the harmony of the riot of those fresh pine trees and pristine white snow on the top of the mountain. After like 30 minutes of sight-seeing, the wintry temperature viciously forced us to view the landscape from inside a cafe as our teeth clattered like crazy and our hands turned cyanotic. We were reluctant to drive back to Istanbul but life goes on. Treasuring some stimulating final moments on the top of this renowned mountain, we headed down, heading back to Bursa and Istanbul. Again, maps were like our tourist guide, giving the light of directions.





Bearing the full weight of the day's weariness on its shoulders, the sun descended the stairs slowly and left the stage, leaving us to bleak dark horizons as we reached Istanbul. We went for a night walk after the hotel check-in and here, the gorgeous Blue Mosque and Hagia Sophia were like two shining jewels in a sacred garden, soaring up high into the night sky. We had our dinner in a bistro nearby and it was then the time to have one last peaceful night sleep in Istanbul. Enjoying the last sight of Hagia Sophia through the wooden panel of my room, I slowly drifted to the far far away dreamland.



PART THREE

The Bosphorus Strait never looked more stunning than it was today, the last day of ours in Istanbul. We drove off to the beach near the Dolmabache Palace and there were like moments of soul-soothing tranquility. Later that afternoon, we took a ride to Ataturk International Airport after having the last lunch in one of the sultanehmet restaurants.



Like every beautiful thing, even my adventure in Turkey had come to an end. My stay here was like a reverie and leaving was awfully difficult. I started up the stairs to the Turkish Airlines hoping that I could once again say hi to the Blue Mosque some times in the future. Turkey is definitely glorious and there is something for everybody here...

From Irbid With Love,

Hata @ irbid

Thu, October 17th 2007