



GÖRGÜN TANER

Görgün Taner has been General Director of **Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts** (IKSV) since 2002. This not-for-profit cultural organisation was set up in 1973 to promote Turkey's cultural assets, a remit that has now expanded to include film, theatre, jazz, design, and contemporary art. In 2011, Taner was awarded the Légion d'honneur for his work cementing cultural ties between France and Turkey. [iksv.org](http://iksv.org)

## ✦ my favourite street

# Kemankeş Caddesi, Istanbul

The seaside suburb of Karaköy is home to The Istanbul Museum of Modern Art. The area's grand mansions now host cafés, galleries, and groundbreaking Biennial shows. **Words by Tristan Rutherford**

A century ago, Kemankeş Caddesi in Karaköy was as cosmopolitan as they come. Greeks, Turks, French, and Italians sipped coffee on the quay. The headquarters of the Ottoman Empire's grandest banks looked out over the Bosphorus, from which steamboats sped onwards to Odessa, Athens, and Beirut.

"In 2015 the scene is remarkably similar," says Görgün Taner. "Our world-famous **Istanbul Biennial** (next edition September 2015) is held in the venues that stud these very streets." Taner's other cultural events, including April's Film Festival, June's Music Festival, and July's Jazz Festival, attract 100 nationalities into this waterfront zone.

"Fortunately the best restaurants are all within a five-minute walk of each other," explains Taner. **Karaköy Lokantası** offers a gourmet take on the traditional Turkish seafood restaurant, where dishes such as marinated mackerel are served on white linen tablecloths. Next door, female chef Didem Şenol imported her experience

from New York's three-Michelin-star Eleven Madison Park restaurant to create **Lokanta Maya**. Contemporary Bosphorus bites include crunch-crust sea bass with pomegranate pilaf.

**Fransız Geçidi** is a rococo arcade off Kemankeş Caddesi. "The newly opened eateries and stores inside this ritzy passage come personally recommended," says Taner. "For Turkish classics like lamb and yoghurt I hit **Bej**. For a far cheaper Viennese cake and espresso I choose **Karabatak** around the block." **Kağıthane**, also inside Fransız Geçidi, sells cute sandals, Istanbul notebooks, build-your-own paper lampshades, and other must-buy gifts.

"In fact, a dozen off-beat stores have opened in the past 18 months." Taner recommends **Ece Ajandası**, where Istanbul's cultural elite purchase their leather-bound diaries. There is also **Atölye 11**, "a basement cornucopia of colourful *objets d'art*, guarded by the world's cutest puppy, Alfie". Plus the new

second-hand bookstore **Ferman Sahaf**, which "sells vintage magazines that live and breathe history". It's next door to the **Galata Greek School**, a neoclassical former schoolhouse that hosts several Biennial cultural events.

The Karaköy district's crowning glory is the mammoth **SALT** exhibition space inside the former Ottoman National Bank HQ. Besides the monthly exhibitions, walk-in movies, and lectures, Taner likes "the ground floor SALT Library and Research Centre". It boasts comfy armchairs and bookshelves stocked with an unparalleled array of design, cultural, and Turkish history tomes. "And if you get hungry, try **Neolokal**, a Slow Food-sanctioned restaurant upstairs that opened in October 2014." ✈ For more information visit Turkey's official tourism portal [goturkey.com](http://goturkey.com)

### ✈ FLIGHT FREQUENCY

Qatar Airways has 17 flights a week from Doha to Istanbul