



How to get to Kuzguncuk?

As Kuzguncuk is on the Asian side of Istanbul, you first need to go to Üsküdar. You can take the intercontinental tube (Marmaray) to Üsküdar from either Sirkeci or Yenikapı.

Perhaps a better option would be a ferry from Eminönü, Karaköy or Beşiktaş. Since the Beşiktaş-Üsküdar route takes less than 10 minutes, you might find yourself wishing it didn't end so quickly.

Once in Üsküdar, you can decide between a 20-minute walk or a 2-minute cab ride. If you like to adventure a public bus, you can catch any of them from the bus station in Üsküdar Square which head north along the Bosphorus.

Kuzguncuk has a pier and you may also like to try to catch a ferry stopping at Kuzguncuk.



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KUZGUNCUK

A Traditional Neighborhood of Peaceful Coexistence

With its long history, rich architecture, fresh air, coffee shops, and chocolatiers, the neighborhood of Kuzguncuk located along the peaceful Asian shores of the Bosphorus far from the crowds and confusion of Istanbul is now the new hot spot for both Istanbulians and visitors.

Surrounded by nature preserves and green cemeteries, Kuzguncuk is a quiet seaside neighborhood consisting of cobblestone streets lined with beautiful, vivid-color wooden houses.

This is a place where you not only can get away from the city, but also get a breath of fresh air. When you are in Kuzguncuk, you definitely will feel like you are not in Istanbul. It's like a romantic road-stop, a whisper in the midst of the urban rush.

Today the Kuzguncuk Mosque and the Armenian Surp Krikor Lusarovich Church sit side-by-side. Just around the corner is a large synagogue as well.

So close were these different communities that the Armenian community made a donation for the construction of the Kuzguncuk Mosque.



A Peaceful Place of Coexistence

Kuzguncuk was first a residential area for the Jewish community. Later this neighborhood was opened to the Armenians, Greeks, and Muslims. For years all these communities lived together in peace and harmony. There are two synagogues, two Orthodox churches and one Armenian church, and two mosques. Kuzguncuk blends all of these spiritual riches together into a cultural mosaic.

A good example of this could be a 19th century woman named Victoria, whose mother was a Greek Orthodox, father was a Jew, and husband was a Muslim Turk.



History

There was settlement in Kuzguncuk as early as the Byzantine era.

Jews, who were expelled from Spain, began settling in the Ottoman Empire in the late 15th century. Over the centuries, many Jews left their traditional quarters of Istanbul such as Balat for villages along the Bosphorus like Kuzguncuk.

The Jews recognized the Kuzguncuk neighborhood as being linked to as a region that was attached to Jerusalem and the Holy Land.

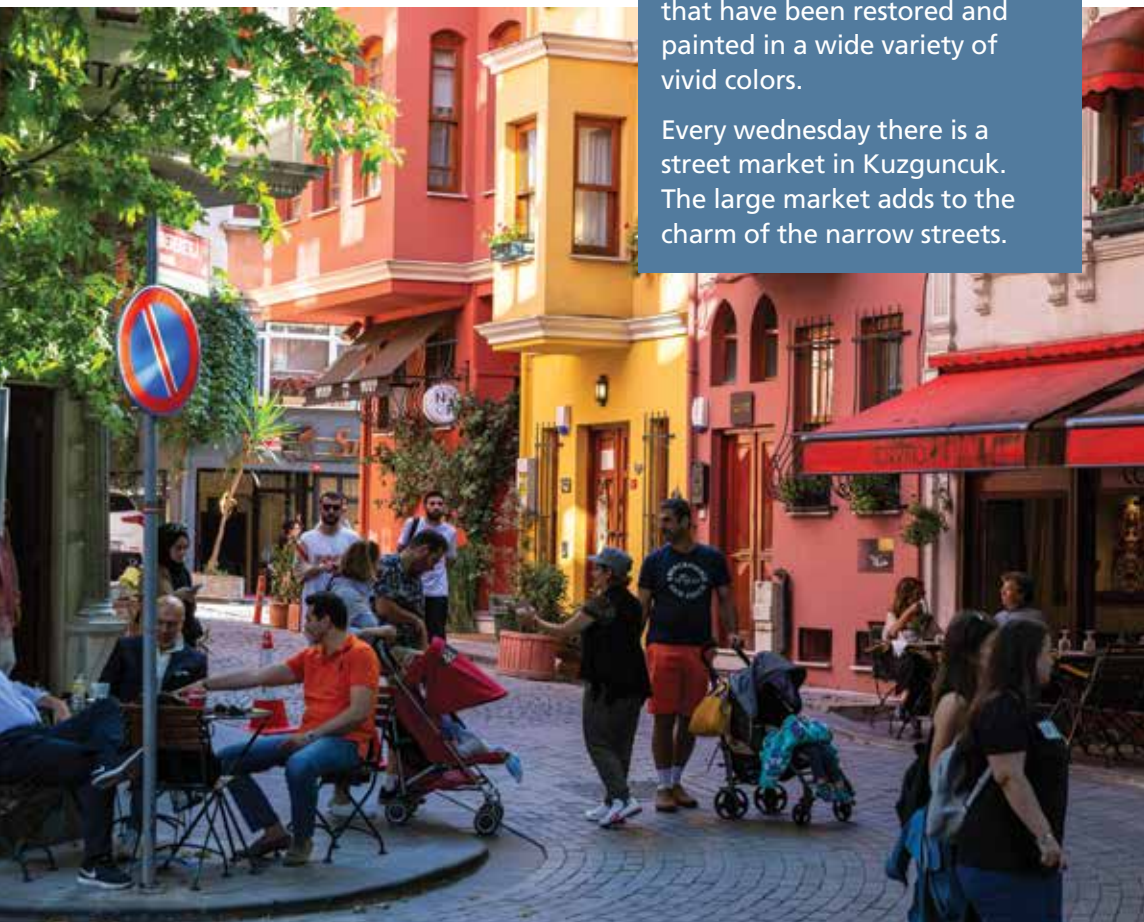
Armenians began settling in Kuzguncuk in the 18th century and had become a sizable group by the 19th century. Their first church was built here in 1835.

Although most of the new residents came from the Black Sea region, Kuzguncuk still maintains its character as a cultural mosaic.

Stroll Around its Streets

Kuzguncuk is the kind of a place where you should take a stroll around its streets, which are filled with old wooden houses that have been restored and painted in a wide variety of vivid colors.

Every wednesday there is a street market in Kuzguncuk. The large market adds to the charm of the narrow streets.



1 Beth Yaakov Synagogue was originally built as a summer services synagogue in 1878. It is the only synagogue that still functions in Kuzguncuk. Although many of the synagogues' former members have relocated to other districts of Istanbul, the Services continued to be held here on the weekends to keep it from closing. To be able to visit this synagogue, you need to apply to the Chief Rabbinate of Turkey in advance.

2 Bet Nissim Synagogue was built in the 1840s, but it does not function anymore.

3 The Nakkaştepe Jewish Cemetery is one of the largest Jewish cemeteries in the city. It dates back to the 16th century with gravestones in both Hebrew and Ladino (A form of Old Spanish spoken by Sephardic Jews). Permission in advance is required from the Chief Rabbinate of Turkey to be able to visit this cemetery.

4 The Armenian Surp Krikor Lusavoriç (St. Gregory the Illuminator) Church was first built by architect Ohannes Amira Serverian in 1835 and later rebuilt in 1861. It is an exceptionally ornate church with a cruciform plan consisting of three naves and a narthex. It is covered with a central dome resting on four large pillars. The interior is well illuminated by windows in its side walls.

5 Ayios Yorgios (St. George) Greek Orthodox Church took its present form when it was renovated in 1996. When exactly this church was built is not known.

6 Greek Orthodox Church of St. Panteleimon and Ayazma was built in 1831 on the site of a church dating back to the 6th century during the time of Emperor Justinian. It was reputedly one of the oldest churches still in use in Istanbul. The domed bell tower was added later in 1911. It is

opened on Sundays for services. There is also an Ayazma (Sacred Spring) located to the left of the bell tower.



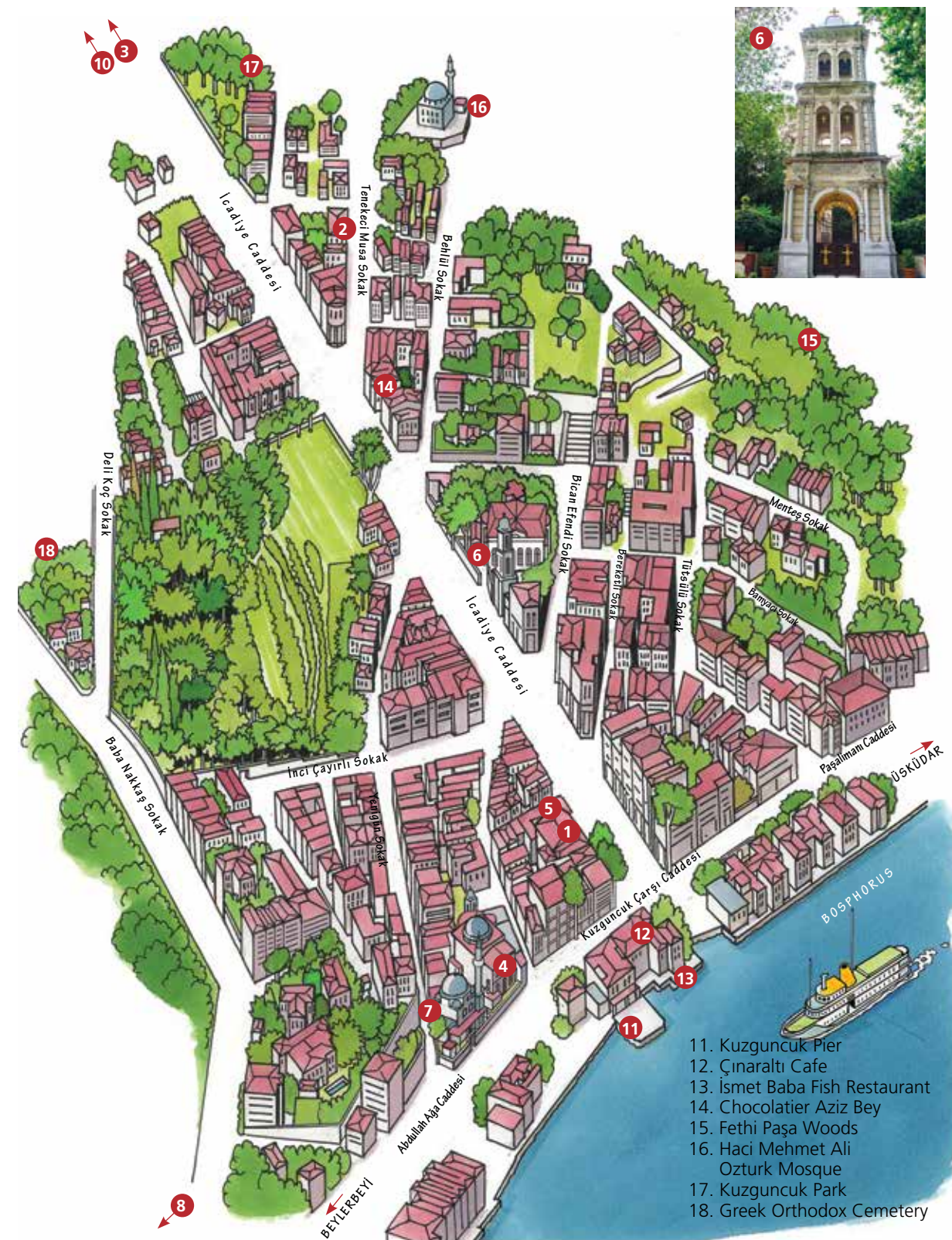
7 Kuzguncuk Mosque became the earliest mosque when it was built in 1952 in the courtyard of the Armenian church.

8 Üryanizade Mosque was originally built as a masjid (a small mosque) in 1860. It was later converted to a mosque which would become famous for its wooden minaret.



9 Kuzguncuk Gardens developed by Üsküdar Municipality, now functions as a community garden where locals plant herbs and vegetables in the middle of the city.

10 Abdülmecid Efendi Pavilion is a historical wooden mansion originally built as a hunting lodge in the 1800s. Neo-Ottoman in design, the beautiful mansion was home to the last Caliph Abdülmecid Efendi, the cousin of Sultan Abdülhamid II. Currently art exhibitions are hosted here.



What to buy?

Strolling along the main street, you will come across butcher shops, bakeries, haberdashery, and stationary stores, along with numerous cafes and restaurants scattered around the neighborhood worth visiting. You will also enjoy browsing small jewelry ateliers, art galleries, curiosity shops, artisan bakeries.

For bookworms and coffee addicts

With their extraordinary funnel-like architecture, the neighborhood cafes and bookstores are hot spots for bookworms and coffee enthusiasts. Some concept bookstores also include the inseparable combination of coffee and books.

For a home cooked meal

Kuzguncuk, being a neighborhood of local businesses, is famous for restaurants featuring a wide variety of home cooked meals.

For those with a sweet tooth

Chocolatier Aziz Bey is a modest chocolate shop in Kuzguncuk where seasonal products are offered to those with a sweet tooth. In the winter season, hot chocolate varieties increase, while in the summer cold chocolate and seasonal fruits are presented with their delicious chocolate desserts.



11. Kuzguncuk Pier
12. Çınaraltı Cafe
13. İsmet Baba Fish Restaurant
14. Chocolatier Aziz Bey
15. Fethi Paşa Woods
16. Hacı Mehmet Ali Ozturk Mosque
17. Kuzguncuk Park
18. Greek Orthodox Cemetery