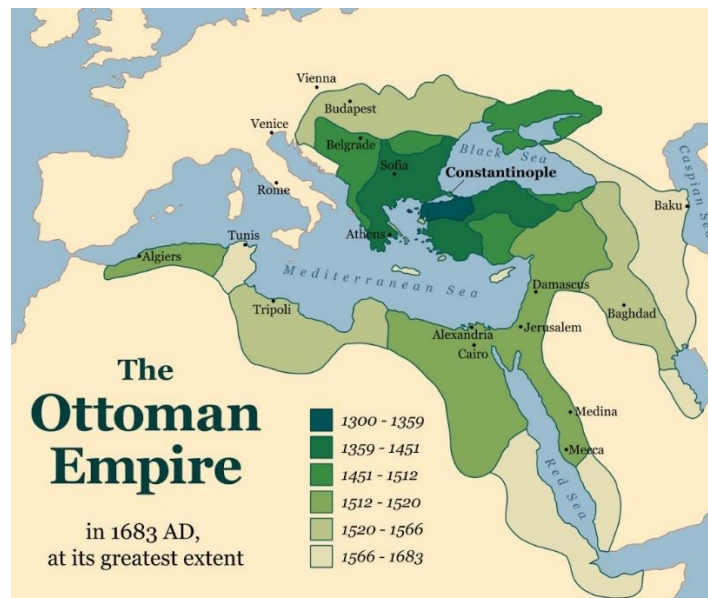




## ISTANBUL & TURKIYE - BOOKS & FILMS

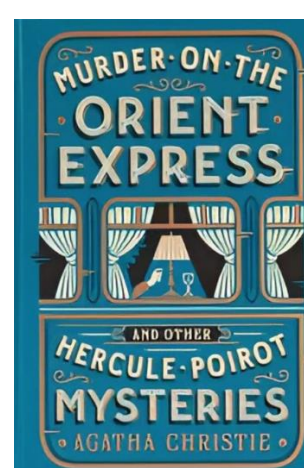
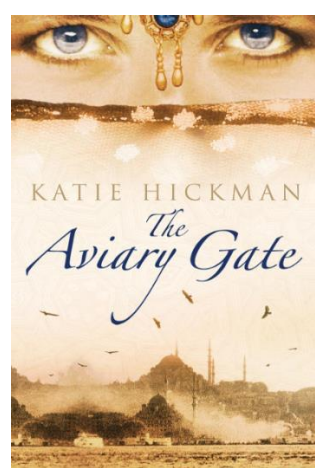
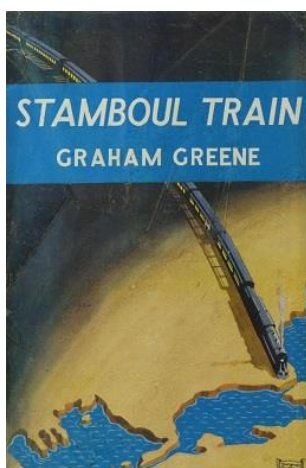
I think we've got to start with Istanbul - an amazing city which bridges the divide between east and west. It is the geographical point where the European and Asian continents meet. On the west side of the Bosphorus is 'European' Istanbul. On the east side of the water is the 'Asian' side of the city. The map shows Constantinople, nowadays Istanbul (below).



**Samboul Train by Graham Greene (1932)** – Samboul Train is the second significant novel by Graham Greene. Set on a train journey from Ostend to Istanbul, the book was renamed Orient Express when it was published in the United States. The novel appeared in 1932 and was Greene's first true success

**Murder on the Orient Express – by Agatha Christie (1934)** this is a masterpiece of story-telling from the greatest and most popular crime fiction writer of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The book has been reprinted many times. There are also two film versions. The opening chapters of the novel take place primarily in Istanbul as the passengers make their way to the train. It's well worth a read.

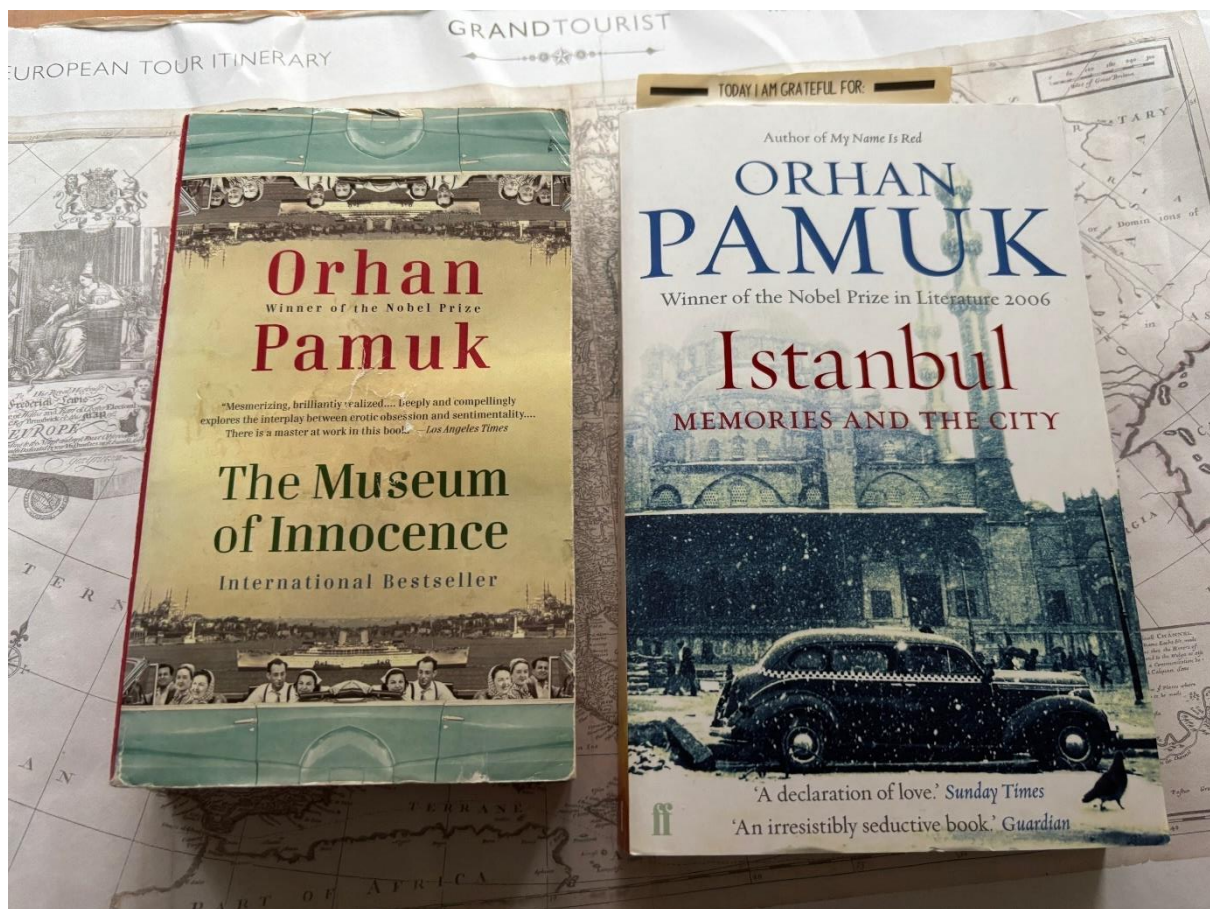
**Aviary Gate – a novel by Katie Hickman (2008)** the story is about a young woman who finds herself in the harem at the Topkapi Palace. There's a modern-day researcher in Istanbul whose story becomes entangled with that of the harem woman. The Galata Tower features as well – a thoroughly enjoyable read.



# GRANDTOURIST



**The Museum of Innocence – a novel by Orhan Pamuk (2008)** - This is a story about Istanbul in the 1970s. It is a love story between a wealthy young man and a young woman. He meets her by chance, whilst shopping for a gift for his fiancée. He describes in painful detail the trials and tribulations of this love story that goes on for many years. This book had such an impact on the author and incidentally many readers (including myself) that Pamuk set up a real, physical 'Museum of Innocence' in Istanbul. In the first edition of the paperback there was a printed ticket to the museum included in the book!



**Istanbul - Orhan Pamuk (2005)** – this is an elegy to the city of Istanbul. A mixture of memories and observations by the author over the last forty years. Elegantly written, Pamuk describes the city as it is now and as it was when he was a boy. The book is illustrated with grainy black and white photographs, in the style of WG Sebald. Recommended.

**The Red-Haired Woman – also by Pamuk (2017)** – this is a powerful story about a well digger and his apprentice. The two men toil all day every day, in the hot sun, to try and find water on a dry and barren piece of land, excavating the earth and rock inch by inch. A theatre group arrives in the nearby town. Each evening a play is performed. The young apprentice falls madly in love with an exotic actress on the stage. But what will become of this obsession and will there be consequences?

# GRANDTOURIST



## MORE BOOKS:

### **Birds Without Wings by Louis de Bernières (2004)**

Although not exclusively set in Istanbul, this novel portrays life in Anatolia and the fall of the Ottoman Empire, offering insights into Turkey's rich history. De Bernieres is a beautiful writer and paints a vivid picture of the Turkish landscape and people.

### **A Mind at Peace by Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar (1949)**

A lyrical novel often compared to *Ulysses*, this is the author's 'magnum opus' and explores love, loss, and change in Istanbul on the brink of World War II. This is Bilge's recommendation and I'm looking forward to reading it very soon. Perhaps on the plane to Istanbul in March!

# GRANDTOURIST



## TELEVISION AND FILM

**Intersection – Turkish TV Series (2016)** a soap opera / drama about a wealthy family in Istanbul and the trials and tribulations of big business, inheritance and mad family members in the attic. All very Jane Eyre. Heathcote is (of course) incredibly handsome. The main guy is played by actor Ibrahim Celikkol (ridiculously handsome).

Here's a trailer: <https://youtu.be/aMk0rB7rlwk?si=u-29ISpVIOAhglZ3>

**Kedi – documentary (2016)** - If feline adventures are more up-your-street then I'd suggest Kedi a feature length documentary about the cats of Istanbul (2016)



**Innocence of Memories (2015)** - Inspired by Orhan Pamuk's novel *The Museum of Innocence*, this film offers a poetic and atmospheric view of Istanbul.

**From Russia with Love (1963)** - A James Bond classic featuring iconic scenes filmed in Istanbul, including the Basilica Cistern (underground water reservoir) and Hagia Sophia.

**Mustang (2015)** – A powerful Turkish film which captures the cultural contrasts of rural and urban Turkey. Much of the film is set in Istanbul.



If you'd like to do a little more reading about Istanbul then I've written a variety of articles over the last few years on my blog: [www.educated-traveller.com](http://www.educated-traveller.com)

Here are a couple of links:

[The Museum of Innocence](#) – my thoughts on this novel and a little about Istanbul

[Turkiye preparation - behind the scenes](#) – Istanbul, Orient Express and our obsession with 'Orientalism'



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