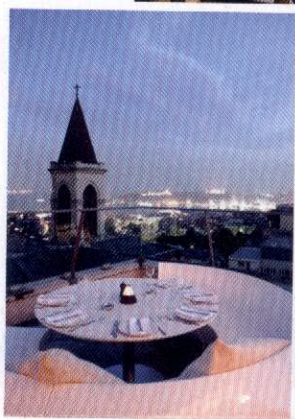


TRAVEL

CLOCKWISE
FROM RIGHT:
Fab city views
from the
Istanbul Witt
Suites; the
Topkapi Palace's
ornate harem;
dine on the
rooftop of 360
Restaurant



LOW-COST LUXE *Witt Istanbul Suites, ISTANBUL*

INSIDE: Looking for a well-priced city retreat that's big on style and location? The Witt Istanbul Suites, the first hotel from award-winning Istanbul-based designers Autoban, offers the perfect package. The 17 suites showcase hip retro-modern design, yet come with the price tag of a small room in a standard hotel. Mine had the feel of an open-plan apartment, with edgy furnishings, a huge marble bathroom and kitchenette, plus a living room with DVD player, flat screen and iPod dock.

OUTSIDE: Situated in trendy Cihangir, the hotel is moments from funky cafés, cutting-edge interiors boutiques and design shops. This once-derelict neighbourhood has been transformed in the past 10 years and is now a place to be seen, to shop and to dine out. Don't miss the *meyhanes* – outdoor restaurants, where you'll find the locals dining at candlelit tables.

Istanbul is the European Capital of Culture for 2010 and the top sites – the 6th-century Hagia Sophia, Topkapi Palace and Blue Mosque – are right on your hotel doorstep. You're on holiday, so don't forget to relax. The rooftop bar of 360 Restaurant (360istanbul.com) is perfect for cocktails with a view, while its stunning sister bar 360 Suada Club (360istanbul.com), built on a floating island on the Bosphorus, even has the glamour of its own swimming pool. *Rebecca Shannon*

DETAILS Doubles
at Witt Istanbul Suites
(00 90 212 393 79 00;
wittistanbul.com)
cost from €159 (around
£139) including
breakfast and taxes.
Fly London Stansted to
Istanbul Sabiha Gökçen
from £39.99 one-way
including taxes, with
Pegasus (0845 084
8980; flypgs.com).