

# TEXCITY TIMES

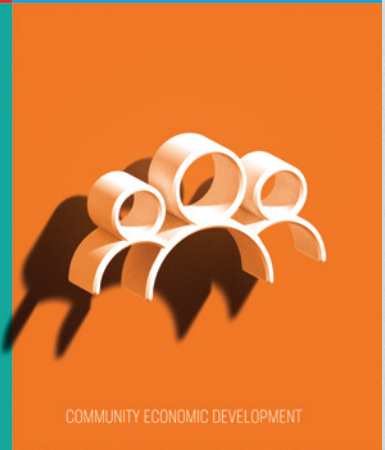
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THE ROTARY FOUNDATION MONTH





Dear Texcitions.  
Warm greetings to you all!

Months of planning finally brought us a great result - our trip to Turkey. Twenty-six of us (Twenty-two from our Texcity family and four friends of Texcity) have had a wonderful trip which was problem free with no unseen problems, health or otherwise. Each one of us came back with wonderful memories. I am sure the next time around we shall have even more participation. You will read a detailed report of the trip in this issue with photographs put together by our editorial team.

Leadership is a powerful construct. A leader is envied for the position and authority he enjoys. He receives adulation and is celebrated as a champion and deliverer. High and powerful positions are fervently sought out for all the promises they hold. The same cannot be said of the Leadership in the form of a President of a Rotary Club. Often, it's a road travelled alone. However, I must admit that its not the case with our club. Here the President is assured of unconditional support of every kind to help to deliver a memorable Rotary year.

Whatever responsibility I have given you members, you have strived to do your best. The proof is there for all of you to see - the building committee, the international trip committee, the Anns and Annets, each of you have stood by me and continue to help to take our club to newer heights. On the day of our return from our international trip, some of the Anns were present at the projects planned on that day. If this isn't proof of great commitment and the camaraderie that we enjoy among ourselves then what is? In many a club there are people watching not encouragingly from the sidelines, but our club is different and each and everyone of you is a cheering member. I am grateful for that.

As we move forward there are some more boxes to be ticked, the important ones being our contribution to the foundation and adding new members. I feel confident with the support of all we will be able to meet the targets set at the beginning of the Rotary year

On 9th August our Annet Rithika Karthikeyan, left for Sao Jose do Rio Preto, a city located in the state of Sao Paulo, Brazil on a long-term Rotary Youth exchange program. I am happy to learn that our young ambassador has settled well in her host parents' home and is making us proud. We shall plan to have a zoom meeting with her and her host club soon.

Friends I would like to share with you all a thought. "Behind all seen things lie something vaster, everything is but a path, a portal, or a window opening to something other than itself." These words of wisdom from Antoine de Saint Exupery help me see life in a better perspective. We should look for more than what meets our eye, every situation is helping us learn something new, taking us forward to newer territories and achievements. Let's strive together to create hope in the world.

Rtn. MD Vijaykumar Sivanaesan  
President 2023-24.



TRAVEL IS THE ONLY THING YOU BUY  
THAT MAKES YOU RICHER

Travel is a fundamental aspect of human existence, with profound significance for personal growth, cultural enrichment, and global understanding. So when my President suggested an international trip to Turkey, I was the first to put up my hand. The comfort of traveling in a group, that comprises or fellow Rotarians was another incentive.

Istanbul (formerly Constantinople) the very name always had me intrigued. The region is so steeped in history and was always on my bucket list. Thanks to Rotary and President Rtn. Vijaykumar Sivanesan the box got ticked.

Let me give you a few reasons as why you should visit Turkey at least once.

- It has many archaeological sites spread all over the country
- It is home to 21 UNESCO heritage sites
- It's the fourth most visited country in the world
- It's got beautiful beaches
- It's city Istanbul is in two continents - Europe and Asia.
- Istanbul alone has over 3500 mosques and is gone to two most famous mosques - Hagia Sophia and The blue Mosque.
- Turkish food - corba, kumpir, kebab, kofte, Turkish coffee, baklava and more
- Hot air balloon ride over the unique Cappadocia region with its breathtaking natural formations
- Hot springs and terraces pools in Pamukkale
- The famous Turkish Hamams - the ancient spas.

Hope these are enough to excite you to plan a trip. In the following pages our itinerary is shared and I would suggest that add one more day in Istanbul and if time and budgets permit to add a day in Antalya too.

Rtn. Ramesh Nichani  
Editor - Texcity Times

# PAINT PARTYS

On 14 th October the Annets of Texcity conducted their fundraiser event - PAINT PARTY.

They had 38 registrations of which three were given free sessions. There were 2 special children from Ashirwad Special School and the Rotary Coimbatore Texcity Hall caretaker Meenakshi's daughter.

The registrations crossed 38 and along with sponsorships and contributions the Annets have collected Rupees One lakh thirty five thousand.

Our own Annet Abinithi Govindh was the resource person. The workshop had four sessions - Garden Stamp Art, Canvas Conversations, Chime Makers, Mailbox Masterpieces. Lunch was provided to all participants. The Annets intend to use the funds raised for helping permanently disabled and bedridden children and for similar deserving projects.



## An Annets Club Fundraiser



## PLAY DATE WITH PAINT

On October 3rd the Annets and Anns club of Texcity handed over 20 hurdles to the Kovai Athletic Academy. They train children of different age groups in athletics and some of these children have reached until the National level.

Rtn Dr K A Kuriachan was the chief guest and motivated the children with his words. The project was done with the hope that it will symbolise the commitment of our Annets to help young children to overcome obstacles in their journey to success.

# Anns' Club

Ann's club recently organized a heartwarming event to bring smiles to the faces of the children from Don Bosco Annai illam. As part of this initiative, they took 15 children along to a special movie screening at Broadway cinemas. The chosen film for the occasion was "LEO." This event aimed not only to provide entertainment for the children but also to create a memorable experience and spread joy among them.

The atmosphere at the cinema was filled with excitement and anticipation as the kids eagerly awaited the start of the movie. By organizing such an outing, Ann's club sought to create a positive impact on these young lives and remind them that they are cared for and supported by their community. The smiles and laughter that filled the theatre during the film were a testament to the success of this endeavour. Together, we can make a lasting impact on individuals' lives and create a brighter future for all.



Recognizing the vulnerability and comfort needs of those residing in Alvernia's old age home during the colder months, the club rallied together to ensure that each inmate received warm sweaters to help them withstand the weather. Additionally, they also extended their support by providing them with some food.

This initiative would not have been possible without the immense generosity displayed by all the Ann's who wholeheartedly contributed towards this cause. Their selflessness and compassion have made a significant impact on improving the lives and well-being of these elderly individuals.



The Anns' club gifted Rs. 5000 to Ms. Meenakshi, Texcity Club's caretaker, on her October 30 birthday. This generous act, spearheaded by Ann Latha Babu and Secretary Devi, spread festive joy.



In a heartwarming initiative to support the elderly residents of Alvernia's old age home during winter, the Ann's Club of Texcity took up the task of providing them with much-needed sweaters and food. This project was made possible through the generous contributions from various members of the Ann's community.

The Anns and Annets club of Texcity handed over 20 hurdles to the Kovai Athletic Academy. They train children of different age groups in athletics and some of these children have competed at the National level. Thanks are due to Rtn Dr K A Kuriachan for being the chief guest and for his motivating words for the children.



Gratitude to President Vijay Sivanesan, Secretary Devi, Rtn C Karthikeyan, Rtn Jude, Ann Pavithra, Ann Srilatha, Ann Valsa for their participation. This project symbolises the Anns commitment to young children to overcome obstacles in their journey to success.

## THE ART OF Thinking Clearly

### SWEET LITTLE LIES Cognitive Dissonance

A fox crept up to a vine. He gazed longingly at the fat, purple, overripe grapes. He placed his front paws against the trunk of the vine, stretched his neck and tried to get at the fruit, but it was too high. Irritated, he tried his luck again. He launched himself upward, but his jaw snapped only at fresh air. A third time he leapt with all his might- so powerfully that he landed back down on the ground with a thud. Still not a single leaf had stirred. The fox turned up his nose: 'These aren't even ripe yet. Why would I want sour grapes?' Holding his head high, he strode back into the forest.

The Greek poet, Aesop, created this fable to illustrate one of the most common errors in reasoning. An inconsistency arose when the fox set out to do something and failed to accomplish it. He can resolve this conflict in one of three ways: A) by somehow getting at the grapes, B) by admitting that his skills are insufficient, or C) by retrospectively reinterpreting what happened. The last option is an example of cognitive dissonance, or rather, its resolution.

Suppose you buy a new car. However, you regret your choice soon afterward: the engine sounds like a jet taking off and you just can't get comfortable in the driver's seat. What do you do? Giving the car back would be an admission of error (you don't want that!), and anyway, the dealer probably wouldn't refund all the money. So you tell yourself that a loud engine and awkward seats are great safety features that will prevent you from falling asleep at the wheel. Not so stupid after all, you think, and you are suddenly proud of your sound, practical purchase.

Leon Festinger and Merrill Carlsmith of Stanford University once asked their students to carry out an hour of excruciatingly boring tasks. They then divided the subjects into two groups. Each student in group A received a dollar (it was 1959) and

instructions to wax lyrical about the work to another student waiting outside - in other words, to lie. The same was asked of the students in group B. with one difference: they were given \$20 for the task. Later, the students had to divulge how they had really found the monotonous work. Interestingly, those who received only a dollar rated it as significantly more enjoyable and interesting. Why? One measly dollar was not enough for them to lie outright; instead, they convinced themselves that the work was not that bad. Just as Aesop's fox reinterpreted the situation, so did they. The students who received more didn't have to justify anything. They had lied and netted \$20 for it - a fair deal. They experienced no cognitive dissonance.

Suppose you apply for a job and discover you have lost out to another candidate. Instead of admitting that the other person was better suited, you convince yourself that you didn't want the job in the first place; you simply wanted to test your 'market value' and see if you could get invited for interview.

I reacted very similarly some time ago when I had to choose between investing in two different stocks. My chosen stock lost much of its value shortly after the purchase, whereas shares in the other stock, the one I hadn't invested in, skyrocketed. I couldn't bring myself to admit my error. Quite the reverse, in fact: I distinctly remember trying to convince a friend that, though the stock was experiencing teething problems, it still had more potential overall.

Only cognitive dissonance can explain this remarkably irrational reaction. The 'potential' would indeed have been even greater if I had postponed the decision to purchase the shares until today. It was that friend who told me the Aesop fable. 'You can play the clever fox all you want - but you'll never get the grapes that way.'

# TEXCITY GOES TO TURKEY

## October 6th 2023

Its 12.00 mid night, in an hour's time we will leave for the Coimbatore International airport to meet our friends and board the flight to Sharjah our transit city for our onward journey to Istanbul. This very name has always had me intrigued, a historic city which was once known as Constantinople, has the unique characteristic of being on two continents - Europe and Asia.

Our adventure started at the airport itself. Alka and me both approached the immigration counter and split up to two different counters and after a few minutes I had cleared the immigration only to learn that Alka's visa had the wrong passport number and hence she could not clear the immigration. Thanks to the presence of mind of Rt. Ann Pavithra and Rtn. Maruti, sitting at the immigration counter a fresh online application for the visa was done and thanks to us having an valid US Visa, the online Visa was issued within minutes and Alka was able to travel.

After a brief (two hours stop at Sharjah) we landed at the award-winning airport in the European side of Istanbul located in Arnavutkoy distict. Our guide Mr. Mert Sarikaya, a handsome young man was waiting with a 45-seater luxurious bus to receive us. On his advice, instead of checking into our hotel and wasting time we went straight to Taksim Square where we had an Indian lunch and then spent time on Istiklal street, one of the most happening streets in Istanbul. Around 10.00pm we left for our Hotel - Retaj Royal Hotel in the European side of Turkey.

## October 7th 2023

We had a very early and check out of our hotel to take a domestic flight to Denizil, the airport closest to Pamukkale, from where we took a bus to Antalya. For this we had to cross over the Bosphorus strait to go over from Europe to Asia to the other international airport in Turkey. Within a matter of few minutes, we stepped from one continent to another, truly a unique experience.



Pamukkale is a town in western Turkey known for the mineral waters flowing down white travertine terraces on a nearby hillside. It neighbours Hierapolis an ancient Roman spa city founded around 190 B.C. the ruins there include a well-preserved theatre and a necropolis.

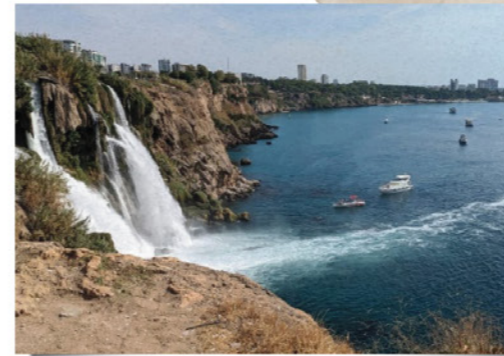
After buffet lunch at a restaurant in Pamukkale and a dip in the thermal waters and some great photo opportunities, we boarded our bus for a seven-hour ride to the beach city of Antalya. We reached Antalya around 10.30 pm and checked into a business hotel - Best Western Khan Hotel, which was right in the downtown. Half of us went to bed tired while the other half (which included us) went to the beachside restaurant for dinner. To my delight there was a musical trio, a good-looking woman along with two good-looking men performing live, Turkish songs. The few vegetarians in the group had a decent dinner while the non-vegetarians had a feast (that is how I think its going to be throughout the tour)



## October 8th 2023

Antalya, a resort city in Turkey, is the gateway to the southern Mediterranean region, with a beautiful turquoise coast. Its harbour is filled with yachts and on the beaches are some great hotels. Antalya was a major Roman port and the city includes a walled old city known as Kaleici which has the famous Hadrian's gate (built to honour the Roman emperor in 130 A.D) as its entrance. The old city houses the Broken Minaret Mosque and many boutique hotels and shops for the tourists. Before visiting this part of the city, we went to see the Duden waterfalls which was emptying itself into the Mediterranean Sea.

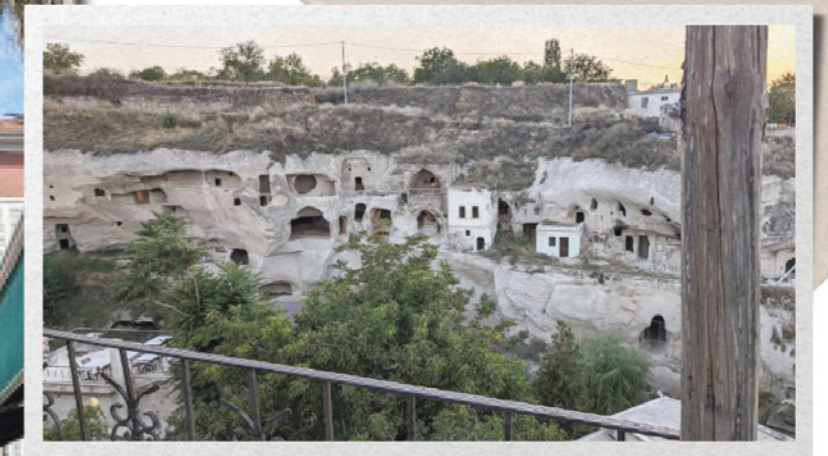
After Lunch, we went around Antalya for shopping only to reassemble at the hotel around 7.00pm for our dinner to another sea side restaurant which again had some live Turkish band performing.



## October 9th 2023

Early morning start to the airport for another domestic flight to the city of Kayseri in the region called Cappadocia. Very excited to travel to this part of Turkey. This semi-arid region is famous for its distinctive "fairy Chimneys," tall cone shaped formations and homes carved into these rock formations by Christian monks and underground cave cities. And, of course for the famous hot air balloon rides.

En route to our cave hotel - Gamirasu, the unique terrain unfolded in front of our eyes, where ever we looked from our bus the view was breath taking. It looked like some magical land we were transported to.



## October 10th 2023

4.00am wake up today. Very excited as we are going on the hot air balloon ride over the valleys of Cappadocia (Derived from the Persian word "Katpatuka" meaning the land of beautiful horses. Incidentally the horse is the national animal of Turkey and Tulip the national flower) From our hotel we were taken in a bus to the hot air balloon site. The balloons were being filled with hot air and slowly beginning to rise against a topaz blue sky. As I looked around, I could see many more balloons slowly beginning to rise. Our wicker basket could hold 30 people and were divided into 9 boxes the center one for the pilot and his assistant. We were helped into the basket and the balloon was filled with more hot air. Each time the flame was set higher the colour of the balloon changed. In the silent early morning, the sound of the burners filling the air added to the excitement.

After we were all inside the basket the balloon under the expertise of our pilot (his 1000th ride, he said), gently ascended into the sky. The surreal landscape of Cappadocia revealed itself beneath us. The region's famous fairy chimneys, with their whimsical shapes and ancient cave dwellings, dotted the terrain. The bird's eye view that we got was just magical.

And when we raised our head to look straight the sky was filled with more than 100 balloons of different colours and size floating in the sky, occasionally changing colour when the burners burst of flame. The skilled pilot was able to turn the balloon 360° to give everyone in the basket a 360° view. No balloon was even within shouting distance.

As we reached a higher altitude, the sun which was behind the hills, began to rise and fill the sky with different colours and illuminated the intricate details of the rock formations. At that point I felt a profound sense of gratitude for being able to do this - for it was this natural wonder from such a vantage point. After some time, the pilot began to descend back to Mother Earth and skillfully landed the wicker basket on a waiting vehicle with a trailer which would take the hot air balloon to its shed.

The dream-like adventure over one of nature's unduplicatable unique beauty came to an end leaving me with memories that would last a life time. The safe landing was celebrated with sparkling wine. A table appeared from nowhere and glasses were set up and champagne was poured after the traditional champagne shower and we clinked our glasses for many more such experiences. Later in the day we visited two local factories one making the famous Turkish pottery and one for Turkish jewellery. Purchases were made.

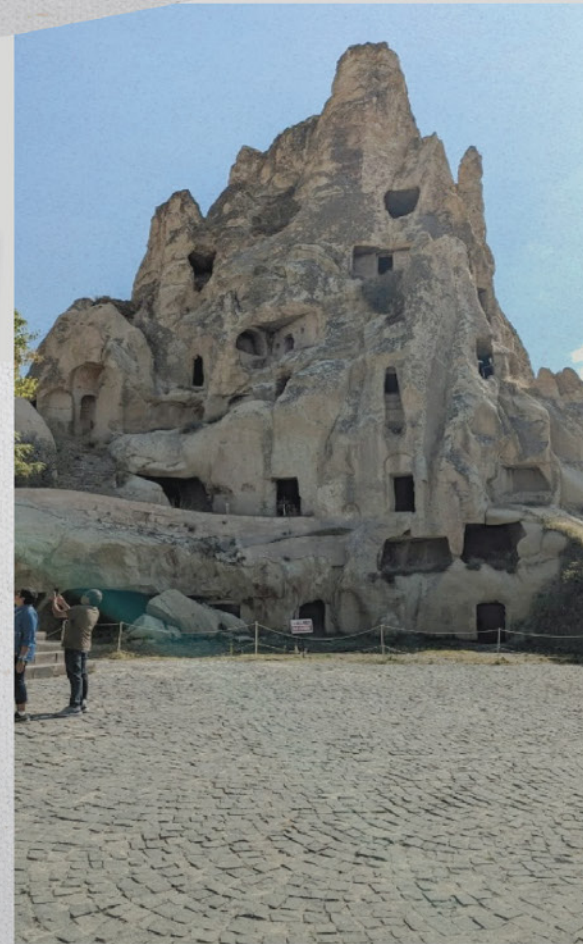
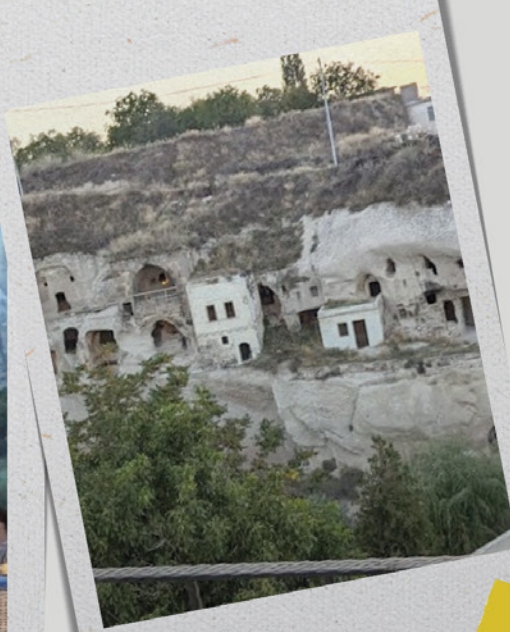
We had local food in local restaurants and spent an evening enjoying a Turkish night, complete with local alcohol and dance. Some of us also squeezed in a Turkish Hamam experience with mixed reviews. We stopped at three places which have these unique rock formations - Love valley, Imagination valley and Three beauties.

### Turkish night

Our guide suggested a Turkish night at one of the local restaurants. This restaurant too was designed like a cave with a center stage from which sprang about six or seven corridors which housed about 40 people each. So overall, there were about 250 plus guests watching the performance happening on the center stage.

The deal was 55 Euros and included the show, unlimited local alcohol, and food. Local liquor - Raki, Bazooka (their vodka brand), beer, red and white wine from their region and unlimited soft drinks was on offer. We started with their wines and then moved on to Bazooka. The vodka was smooth and wines were average. The entertainment was very peppy. The music was Turkish but with rhythmic beats which made you tap your feet or clap your hands. The performers were good-looking/pretty.

There was a costume change three or four times. They got the guests involved too. They had a sort of mock wedding ceremony where they made a guest like a bride and pulled volunteers from the crowd to make them compete to be a potential groom. They were made to arm wrestle, do push-ups or dance to win the bride's hand. It was good fun. Another time the dancers went into the crowd and asked people out by putting out their hand and walking you to the dance floor. I too got selected by one pretty dancer and in fact many of us were selected and we were made to dance as a group to some peppy music and overall, it was fun. There were three solo acts, two by the same dancer who did one traditional dance and one belly dance. The grand finale was this beautiful looking young woman, who was a scintillating belly dancer (she managed to make people get up from their seats and go dancing to her to tip her). she would refuse to take tips in hand, and ask them to put it down into her skimpy blouse.)



Nestled near Urgup in Cappadocia, the Gamirasu cave hotel offered a unique blend of history and luxury. As we stepped into the ancient caves turned into modern accommodations, the cool, dimly lit interiors evoked a sense of mystery and tranquility.

Looking out from the stone carved windows was a surreal experience. The surrounding landscape of ancient ruins will remain etched in our memory.

En route to the hotel we stopped to see an underground city and it was quite an experience. Carved into soft volcanic rock, these subterranean complexes served as shelters and storage for ancient communities.

Navigating through the narrow passages, hidden rooms, and ventilation shafts gave a fascinating glimpse into the ingenuity of those who created them. The cool, dimly lit atmosphere added to the mysterious allure, and made it into an unforgettable experience.

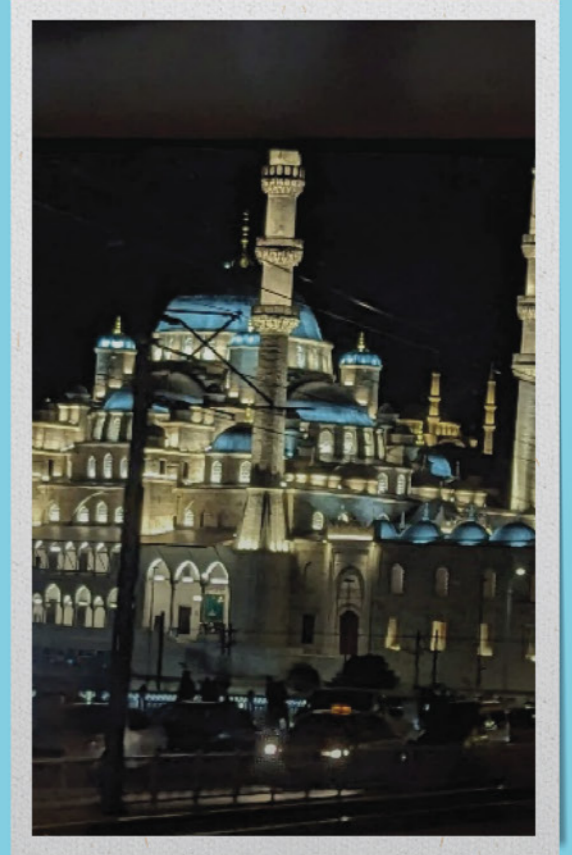
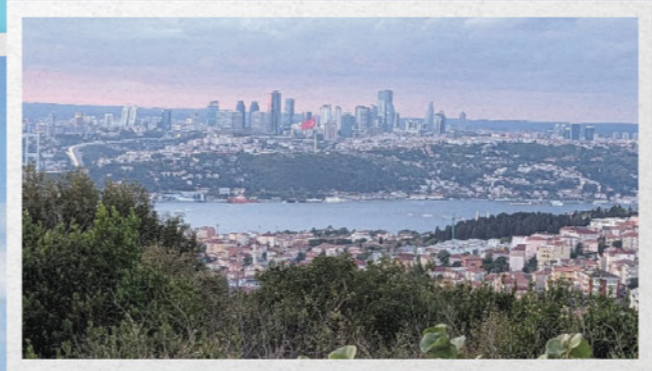


Some members of our group went on a dirt bike ride to watch a beautiful sunset. I took a raincheck to enjoy a little extra time in the award-winning hotel.



We were in time for the sunset. The metropolis, with its minarets and historic landmarks silhouetted against the golden canvas of the setting sun was a sight to behold. After the sun had set you could see the lights twinkling like stars on the European side of Istanbul. These sights will remain etched in my mind. It is here that we had the best Simit and Kumpir from a cafe on the hill.

After we checked into our hotel and a short break, we reassembled for our cruise on the Bosphorus. On the cruise this time there was a Master of Ceremonies who doubled as a singer too (knew a line or two of songs in many different languages, including Hindi) three female and three male dancers and a belly dancer. There was also a whirling Dervish. At the end of the performances (Turkish gypsy, folk, Caucasian, belly dance etc.) the DJ took over and to the delight of half the people on the boat played a Bollywood set and the power of India was there to see. Some of us went on to the deck to enjoy the chilly weather and fabulous views of the palaces and the best hotels in Istanbul along the river banks. Their twinkling lights were almost telling us to stay for a few more days....



## October 11th 2023

Today we fly back to Istanbul.

En route to our hotel from the Asian side of Istanbul we had a stop at the Camlica hill. Which is a hill in the Üsküdar district of the Asian side of Istanbul. At 288 m (945 ft) above sea level, Camlica Hill offers a panoramic view of the southern part of Bosphorus and the mouth of the Golden Horn. (The Golden horn is a major urban waterway and the primary inlet of the Bosphorus in Istanbul.) This is a heavily guarded area as the Turkish President (Recep Tayyip Erdoğan born 26 February 1954), has his home here.



## October 12th 2023

Finally, on our last day in Istanbul we were to visit the two most famous mosques. The Hagia Sophia and The Blue Mosque. Entering Hagia Sophia felt like stepping into a living history book. The grandeur of its domed architecture and ancient mosaics transported me to another era. The interplay of light and shadow added a mystical touch to the experience. Next, the Blue Mosque unfolded before me, adorned with intricate tiles that painted a mesmerizing blend of blue hues. The serene atmosphere and the call to prayer created a profound sense of cultural immersion. Istanbul's rich tapestry of history came alive in the heart of these architectural marvels.

We also visited the Grand Bazaar. #Regarded as the first shopping "mall" in the world. #Largest and oldest covered market. #61 covered streets and over 4000 shops #attracts 250000 to 400000 visitors daily #Bazaar has been since 1455/56 #Destroyed by fire and earthquakes multiple times and rebuilt





#We had limited time, no intentions of shopping (we were warned that this place requires a lot of bargaining), and decided to spend the most time in jewellery shops admiring the excellent jewellery. But ended up shopping something (no not jewellery)

The evening was for shopping. Most of us went to a mall and after a few hours of shopping, the very tired ones went back to the hotel and the adventurous took the metro back to Taksim Square, one of the agenda was to try the famous cheese cake at a very famous café in front of the Galata Tower.

After three kilometers walk on Istiklal street we reached the Galata Tower. At the Galata Tower is this amazing cafe - Viyana Kahvesi which serves coffee and desserts. We ordered the famous San Sebastain cheese cake and a tiramisu. As we stepped into the cafe, the aroma of freshly brewed coffee and the promise of exquisite desserts filled the air. The atmosphere was bustling, people waiting for a table (all to seat only two people and numbered for easy billing)

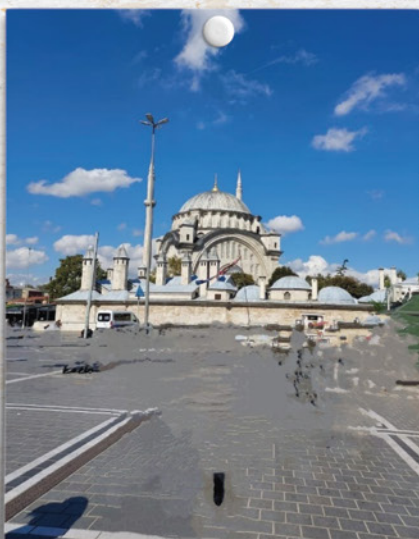
We settled at a table with a view of the tower on which laser images were being projected, the perfect backdrop for our culinary experience. The first bite of the cheesecake was sheer delight. The creamy texture melted in our mouth, and the sweetness was perfectly balanced by a subtle tanginess. Not overly sweet, served with a chocolate sauce, it did not have a biscuit base, but was only pure cheesecake. Each bite was an indulgent experience, and we savored every forkful as we gazed at the bustling crowd.

Next, we turned our attention to the tiramisu. The presentation was a work of art, with delicate layers of mascarpone and ladyfingers. With our first spoonful, we were transported to dessert heaven. The coffee-soaked ladyfingers and velvety mascarpone were a harmonious blend of flavors. It was like a symphony for the taste buds.

As we enjoyed every morsel of these exquisite desserts, the world around us seemed to fade away. The Viyana Kahvesi had turned a simple dessert into an extraordinary experience. It was a moment of pure indulgence, with every bite leaving an indelible memory of Istanbul's rich culinary heritage.

## October 13th 2023

All good things come to an end for better things to happen. So, we left our hotel after a sumptuous Turkish breakfast for the Airport on the European side of Istanbul for a flight back home. With our hearts filled with gratitude and memories of a country steeped in history, we boarded the flight, thanking the almighty for this opportunity.



**ROTARY CLUB OF  
COIMBATORE TEXCITY**  
Charter Club No. 27060 RI Dist 3201