



European
Joint
Support Unit

Activities

Istanbul





SPORTS & RECREATION

Sports facilities as we would expect them in the UK are hard to come by and / or expensive. The following list is not inclusive, but gives an idea of what is available:

- a. There is horse riding available in Zek, including lessons for children, however there have been mixed reports on how the horses are cared for.
- b. There is a Tennis Club in Zekeriyaköy although membership is quite costly.
- c. Communal swimming pools are often provided in housing areas (compounds) and currently all UK houses have such access.
- d. There are large expanses of forests locally, although there is no formal footpath system and some areas are fenced off. Walking and mountain biking are good and it is possible to cycle to work through the woods – approx. 20km and takes 1hr 15min. However, it should be noted that Zekeriyaköy is a very hilly area and this combines with heavy traffic and dog packs to make road cycling an uncommon activity, though the sight of cyclists is increasing.
- e. There is a gym on camp with showers and changing facilities (but no fans or air conditioning, making it very hot in summer.) There is also a running circuit through the woods on the base and tennis courts.
- f. Squash and golf can be played, but local club membership is required and is expensive.
- g. Skiing is available cheaply in Bulgaria (approximately 7 hours drive) and in Turkey within 4 hours drive of Istanbul.
- h. There are various gyms in the Zekeriyaköy area, ranging from CrossFit / MMA to machine and weight rooms. Civilian gym membership can be expensive, in excess of \$1000 per year.
- i. **Sailing & Boating.** Despite Turkey having one of the oldest navies in the world, Istanbul and the coastal areas around it is not the sailor's paradise you might have thought. The Bosphorus is too busy (and making way under sail is prohibited), the Black Sea is too unpredictable and the Marmara coastline is too industrial. While a boat may be fun in Istanbul, it will be expensive to run and there is limited opportunity to launch dinghies / windsurf / kitesurf locally. However, this is plentiful in the Aegean and Mediterranean coastal resorts.
- j. **Camping.** Camp sites are plentiful in season in the coastal areas but not around Istanbul; standards vary and are inferior to those in Central Europe, but the weather is much more reliable and more suited to outdoor living. Camping equipment is readily available. Disposable camping-gas canisters are available in Turkey, but the Turks themselves use refillable cylinders, available everywhere.