

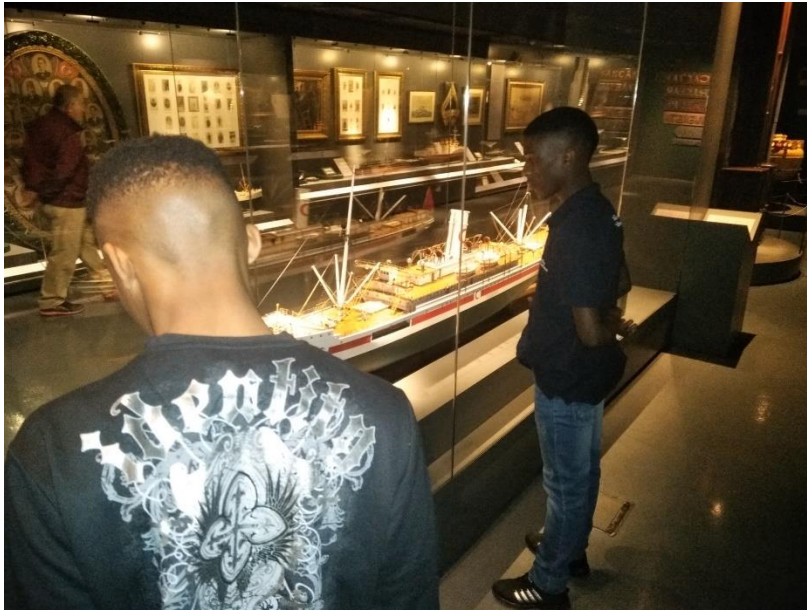
Day 1. Thursday 27th September 2018

I was up at 03.30 and our driver, courtesy of our good friends here in Turkey, arrived at 4am. At that time to the day it was easy to get to Ataturk Airport as the usual traffic, which Istanbul is notorious for, was non-existent so we got there 30 minutes early. The boys arrived on Turkish Airlines direct from Cape Town a little before schedule and were personally whisked through immigration and customs without standing in all the queues, again organised by our local friends, which was fantastic. Back to the University Campus where we have lovely rooms for a few hours' sleep before breakfast at 08.30, a short walk around the neighbourhood and some grocery shopping.

After a simple lunch in our rooms we took off in a taxi to the Naval Museum in Besiktas where we met up with Retired Turkish Admiral Cem Gurdeniz who is our mentor while we are here. What a great guy and very helpful. We organised our week while sitting over a cup of coffee in the Cafeteria and were then handed over to our own personal guide who took us around the very interesting museum – see <http://en.besiktas.bel.tr/entry/istanbul-naval-museum/>







When we had finished we took a short walk to see the Domabahce Palace where the Sultan had lived. By this time it was closed so we got a look at the outside and stood alongside the Bosphoros watching the ships.



We then flagged down a taxi and what a ride home we had, the driver was a maniac and we sped through the traffic at breakneck speed, way in excess of even the normal Turkish drivers – what an experience which will live with all of us for the rest of our lives, which thankfully we still have!

Out for pizzas this evening then off for a good night's rest – What a day!