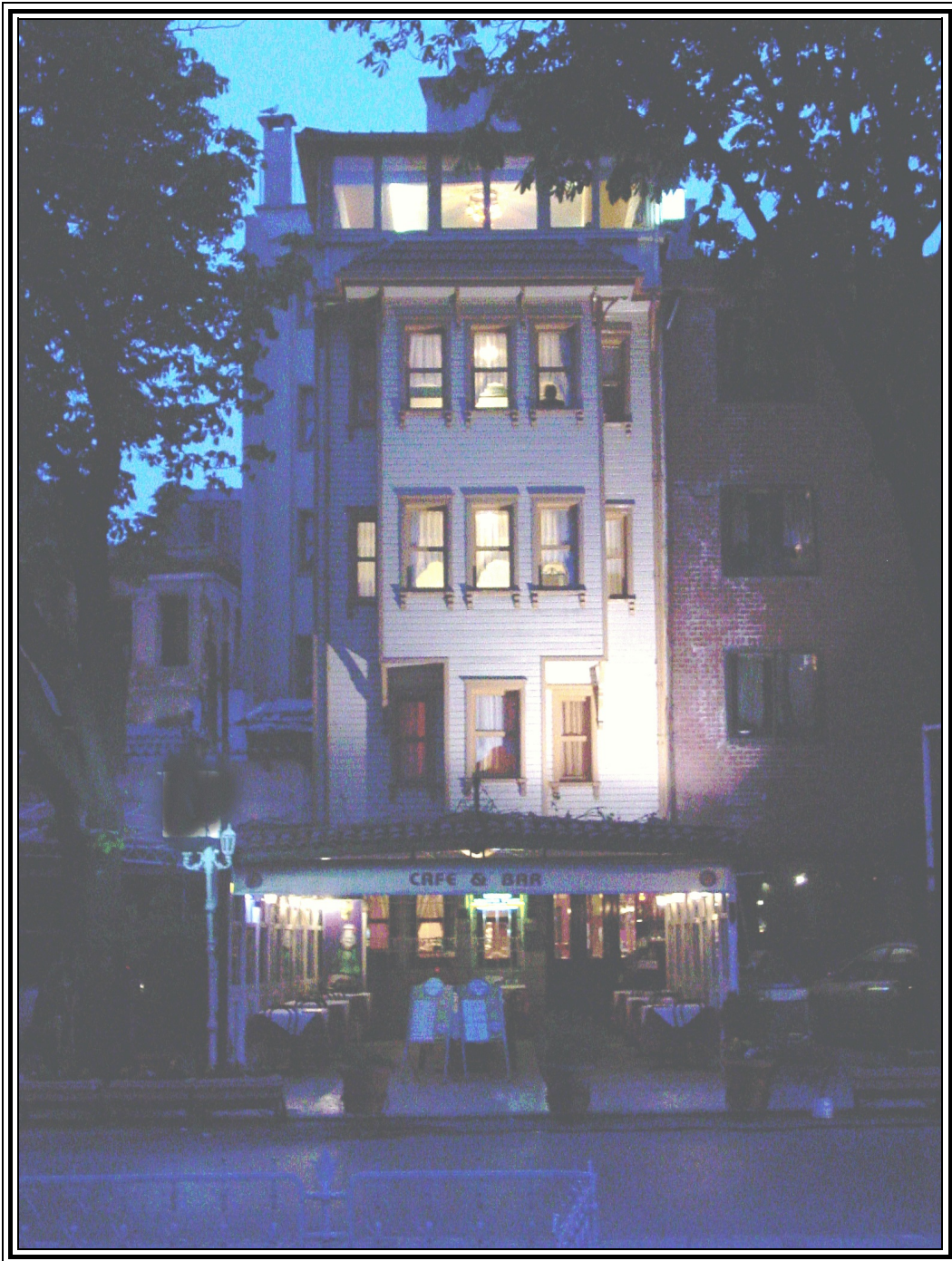


THE ALZER HOTEL



This is where we stayed in Istanbul in April, 2002.

Alzer Hotel Was Found on the Internet

This charming hotel was originally a 19th century Ottoman mansion. It was restored and opened as a redecorated old wooden house in 1986. We liked it immediately upon arrival, not only because of its location, but because of its size and comfort.

There are 21 rooms, but most of them are located at the back of the building, there being only three facing the front. They are rooms 11, 21, and 31. Each of these rooms is as wide as the house. Our room was 21, and we enjoyed it every morning when the sun arose even though many mornings were foggy. The view to be held of the Hippodrome throughout the day was truly outstanding, for one of our favorite sights to see over and over was the obelisk immediately in front. The accompanying pictures of the place taken at night also shows some of its charms.

The owner of this hotel is Mr. Ismail Hakki Yobas and his wife Mrs. Birsen Yobas. They are great owners in that they have an excellent staff, each of whom knows his job, and does it well. The General Manager is Mrs. Aysen Yobas Sur, the owners daughter, and her husband Mr. Metin Sur. Everyone was always helpful and attentive for us, and were wonderfully responsive to our various needs. I am including here the several pictures I took of the place, both inside and out, and am also presenting the pictures of most of the staff, each of whom made us feel very welcome, indeed.

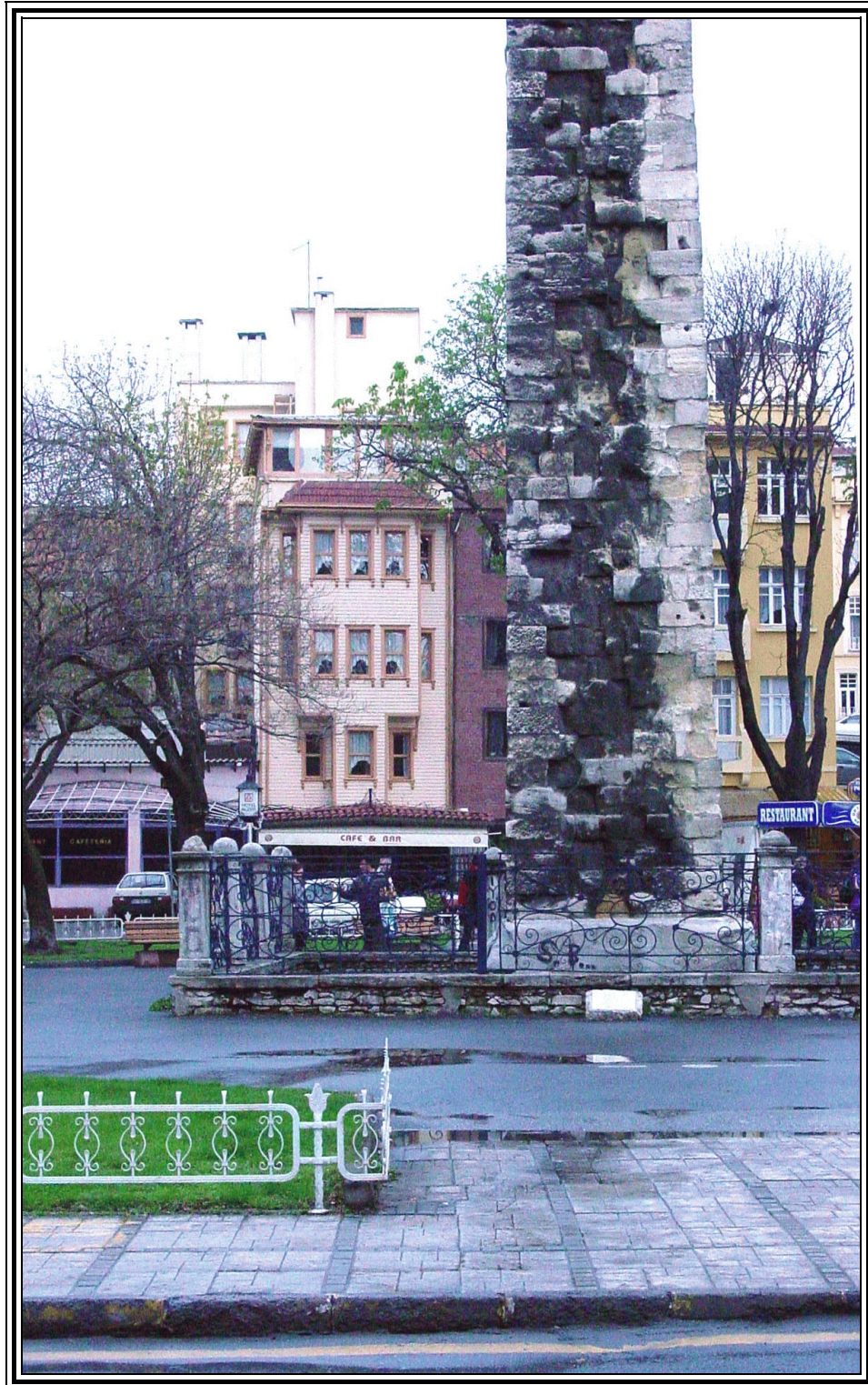
I felt especially lucky in that I was permitted to use a computer to read my e-mail each day, and respond also, which means I used their computer for a significant amount of time. Mss. Hande Dedeal, a superb computer operator, handles computer reservations, and it was mostly her computer that she permitted me to use. Our trip to Istanbul was a great success—much of it due to the Alzer!



Here are two more pictures, each showing some aspect of the hotel that we found enjoyable. Sunshine or clouds, the place was always a welcome sight as we returned each day from our adventures and museum wanderings.

One of the outstanding features of these pictures, especially the right one, with a bigger field of view, is that there are no postcard sellers shown, nor is there a single person selling carpets. I think by the time I took these pictures, the guys knew that Addie Leah and I were not really good tourists at all, as we failed to buy the cards, or to look at rugs, even after many offers to do so.

A close examination will show that the picture on the right, above, was taken after that on the following page. Hint: look at the tree limb in front of the fourth floor dining room.

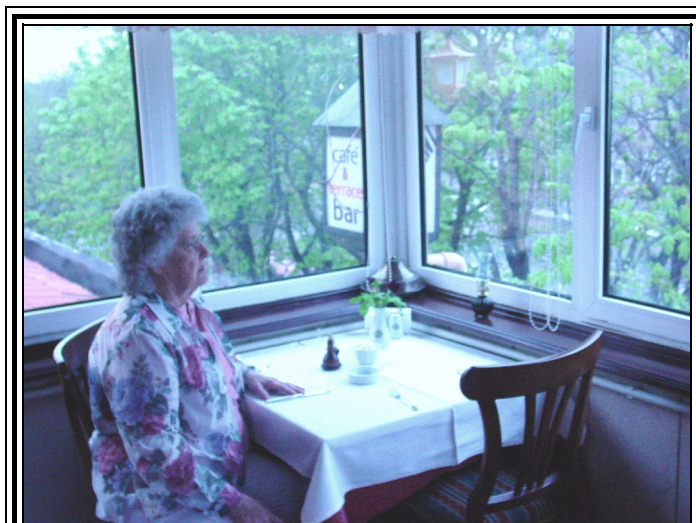


We very much like this view also.



Here was our first stop each morning. The dinning room on the fourth floor (actually the fifth floor, counting the ground floor as floor one) is a very pleasant place to eat. We frequently sat at the corner table.

There was always a good choice of things to eat, and as good Americans should, we sampled each one. Why then did we seem to favor corn flakes and bread? Why, because that is the American Way!





One of the things we liked in all of Istanbul was the abundance of fresh tomatoes. They were everywhere rampant. We also saw many oranges, also available



everywhere.

The wealth of cheese in Turkey is noteworthy, but, boy, did we like the bread.



With a smile like this at the registration desk, shown at the extreme right in the first picture on this page, how could anyone be unhappy? Cengiz always supplied another reason why we should enjoy each day. One of the things I appreciated was the English language newspaper in the lobby each morning. My reading place is shown in the top right picture.



These are pictures of sunrise behind the Blue Mosque, taken from room 21!



On a clear morning, the view from the dining room includes the distant islands, technically in Asia.

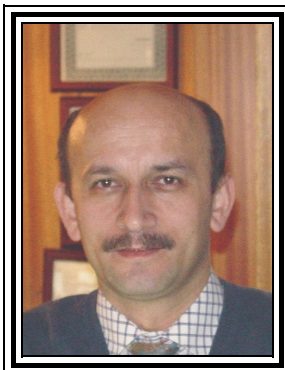


Mr. Metin Sur could be seen in most any part of the hotel, but seeing him at early breakfast was comforting for those who like early risers! (And we never really were!)



Ugur was a regular each morning, and was especially good at dealing with my “off-the-obelisk” questions. (What is the average time for a bird to sit on top of the obelisk?) (Do birds have a fear of falling?) (Why is the auto parking lot not yet busy?) He took all of this kind of abusive behavior with a huge smile, and was much appreciated.

Here we are joined by Veli, on Addie Leah's right, Mehmet between us, and on my left is Hande, the genius behind the whole operation if the truth were known!! She allowed me, without complaint, to use her computer regularly so that I could read my e-mail, etc. I even made a hotel reservation in London from her desk. Now that is going way beyond that required for a good host!! Thank you, Hande!



Here is Omer, whom we found at the registration desk each day. He reeked of efficiency, and that's good!!



Hande, in controlling the place where East meets West, answers each e-mail request with competence and style. She anticipated the thoughts that we had, answered every question just right. Sitting or standing, she is ready to serve.



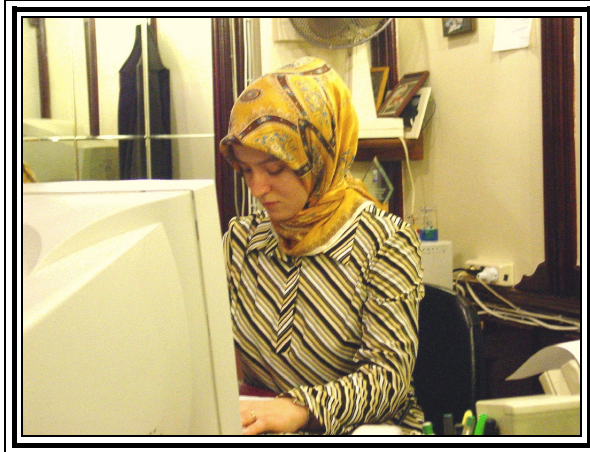
Cengiz and Hande were willing to stand with us for a photograph, and as so many know, that requires a certain measure of courage. Each photograph is a testament of our pleasure at being in Istanbul.



In the Alzer street café, who was the man urging us to eat and drink? Well, Aslan was that person, and I loved arguing with him about most anything. He held up his side of such arguments very well indeed, and for that I greatly admire him, even though he was frequently on very weak ground! (He'll hate me for saying that, but anytime I can have the last word, I'll write it.)



He could also be found in the dining room regularly but we think he was happiest working nearer the bar in the street cafe.



Gul worked at the other computer in the same office with Hande, and never once did I ask to use hers, nor did she suggest I could! So it is clear that she is a superior person—just like Hande. They are indeed a talented lot!



ni tM



Metin and Aslan don't see me in quite the same way.
See Cengiz in the mirror?



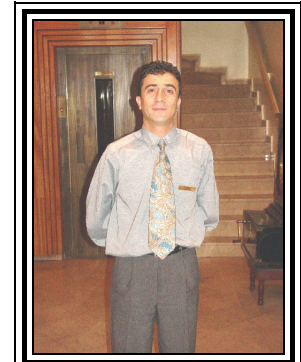
Ugur



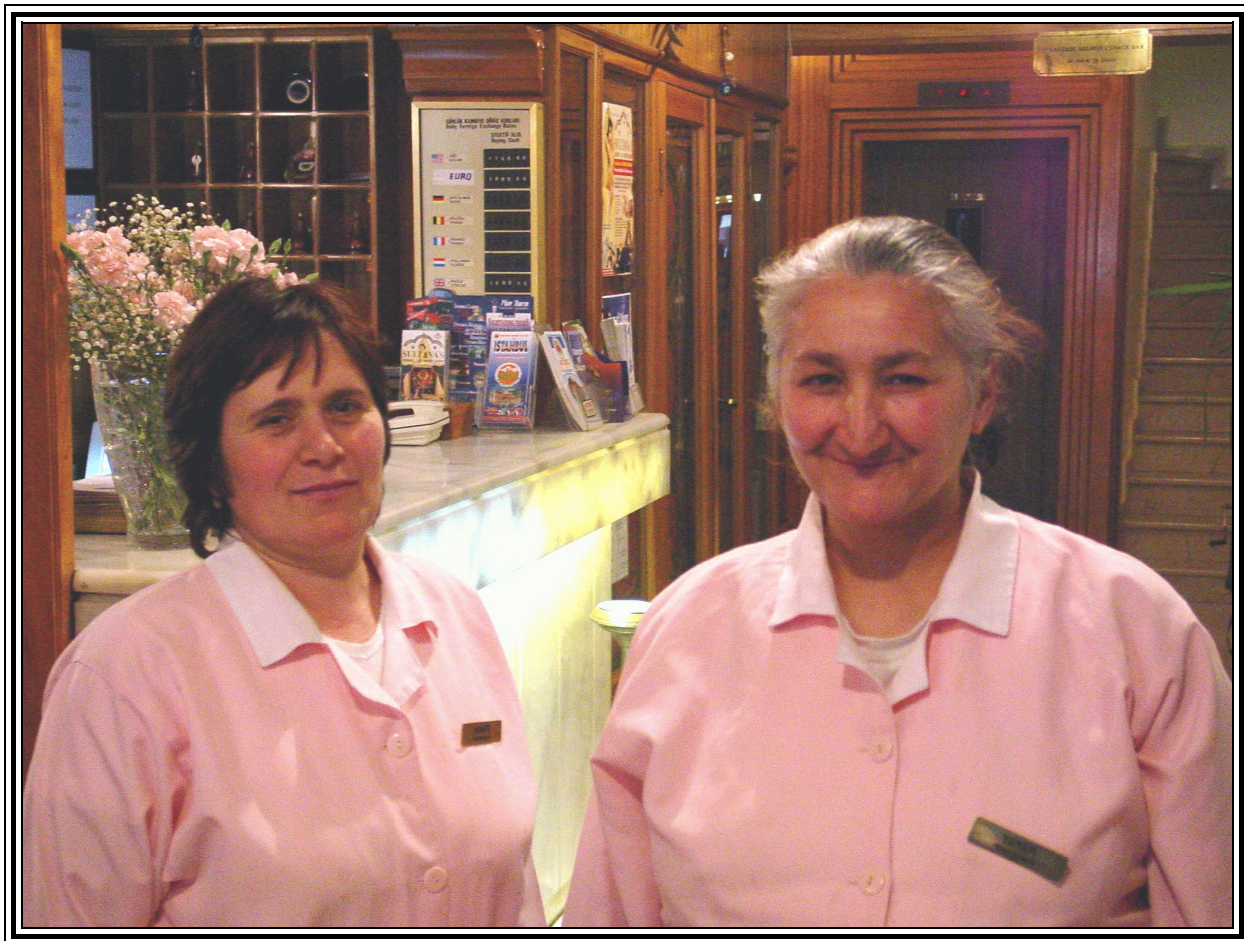
Veli



Mehmet



Cengiz



Hanife and Yeter can be found near the registration desk, but you have to ask for them to appear there! They do a magnificent job with room cleaning. Ours was perfectly done each day.



These are two awards given to the Alzer Hotel in recognition of outstanding achievements as one of the “Charming” Hotels in Istanbul. Every person on the staff should take pride in their Hotel, and the impression they make on their visitors.



But, WHERE is the Alzer Hotel?

There is no better answer to the question than that shown in this picture.



Bordering the Hippodrome, facing the southernmost obelisk, almost across the Hippodrome from the Blue Mosque, and just a few minutes walk from Hagia Sophia, that's where! All of this is very close to the Bosphorus as one can see, above.

Though 5-star hotels in Istanbul are beautiful and elegant, we see no way in which they can surpass the Alzer in hospitality.

This trip, made by Addie Leah and Robert Brownlee, was made in April, 2002.