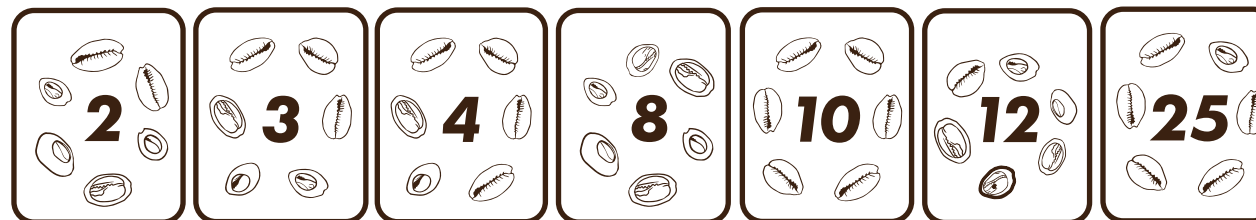# PACHISI

Pachisi is an ancient board game that was played across a vast region, from the Balkans to Anatolia, during the Ottoman Empire. Similar to games like backgammon and checkers, Pachisi stands out as a game that combines both strategy and luck. While it is nearly forgotten today, it was once particularly popular in Ottoman coffeehouses.

Game Atlas is a social initiative that researches, archives, and redesigns ancient and traditional games on-site, transforming them into cultural products. It connects with humanity, culture, and nature through the medium of play.

At the heart of the Istanbul Mini Collection lie the themes of "diversity" and "balance," reflecting the cosmopolitan essence of the city. The designs blend modern geometric forms with traditional motifs, while stained glass and mosaic patterns bring Istanbul's cultural richness to the game surface.

The chosen color palette symbolizes the diverse regions and textures of Istanbul. These colors represent the city's surrounding waters, natural beauty, historic gardens, and its cosmic and spiritual dimensions, adding depth to the designs.

Istanbul, a city that has hosted countless civilizations, conveys this diversity through cyclical motifs. The symmetrical details in the designs reflect the balanced and harmonious relationship between Istanbul's Asian and European sides. Just as the Bosphorus unites the two continents, the patterns on the game surface bring together different elements. These designs, evoking the unique atmosphere of Istanbul, offer game enthusiasts an artistic and immersive experience.

A portion of the proceeds from our products will be allocated to providing free museum passes for young people and including them in our gamified cultural routes.

Game Atlas contributes to the Global Goals for Sustainable Development by working towards Goal 4: "Quality Education" and Goal 11: "Sustainable Cities and Communities."

Under Quality Education, we aim to facilitate young people's access to cultural heritage and engage them in a learning process rooted in cultural and historical knowledge. This not only promotes lifelong learning but also enhances their cultural awareness and appreciation of values.

In line with Sustainable Cities and Communities, we strive to raise awareness about the importance of protecting cultural heritage, encouraging young people to recognize its value and become active participants in its preservation. Through gamified routes, we increase interest in cultural sites and support their sustainable conservation.

Through these activities, we align our goals of "protecting cultural heritage" and "increasing the active participation of young people" with the sustainable development goals.

Pachisi: A Journey from Tradition to Modernity

The Pachisi Game travelled from India to Anatolia via the Silk Road and has preserved its traditional form by being played for centuries in the regions of Gaziantep, Kahramanmaraş, and Kilis in Türkiye. Historically played with seashells in these areas, it continues to thrive as a living piece of cultural heritage.

To keep this tradition alive and carry it into the future, we created both the original version of Pachisi and the Istanbul-inspired Tılsım Series. Drawing inspiration from talismans believed to protect Istanbul, we incorporated protective symbols from obelisks into the game's design. Our hope is that these talismans will not only safeguard the cultural heritage of games but also continue to serve as a bridge between the past and the present.

Pachisi pieces are delivered in their raw form, allowing each player to personalize them. Each player has 4 pieces, which can be customized to their liking.

Rules of Pachisi

Pachisi is played with beads or shells. The outcome of a single throw determines movement based on how many shells land open or closed. There are seven scenarios:

- **1 closed shell:** 12 points
- **2 closed shells:** 2 points
- **3 closed shells:** 3 points
- **4 closed shells:** 4 points
- **5 closed shells:** 25 points
- **All shells open:** 8 points
- **All closed shells:** 10 points


Gameplay Basics:

- Pachisi is played by 2 individuals or 2 teams. Players sit across from each other. Teams play the same way, but more participants are involved.
- To decide the first move, players throw beads, and the highest number begins.
- Each player takes turns throwing beads and moving their pieces based on the score. When it is the turn of the team, only one of the partners tosses beads, together they decide on the move.

Objective:
The goal of the game is to move all four of your pieces from your starting position around the outer squares of the cloth board in a counterclockwise direction and bring them into the center column on your side ("home") before your opponent does.

player starting point

player starting point

Special Rules:

- Each piece enters the game with the number 12 or 25. Each player places a piece with 12 on the right square on his side (1st player's starting point) and 25 on the square in the corner of his right arm (2nd player's starting point).

- Players can move any of the pieces forward by the number scored by throwing the beads. Movement proceeds counterclockwise along the squares on the outer perimeter of the cloth. If there are pieces not placed yet, rolling a 12 or 25 must be used to place them.

- A player who rolls 12, 25, 8, or 10 gets an extra turn. However, if any of these numbers are rolled three times in a row, it's called "zırt," and all three rolls are invalid. Because of this, a player who rolls one of these numbers should wait to complete their series of rolls before making a move. For example, if a player rolls 12, 12, 12, 8, and 2 in sequence, the first three rolls are cancelled, and only 8 and 2 can be used.

- The points earned in each roll must be played with a single piece. Following the example above, the roll 8 cannot be split and played across two pieces. One piece must be moved 8 squares. The number 2, however, can be played with the same piece or a different one.

- In Pachisi, opponent's pieces can be "captured." To capture a piece, your piece must land on the square occupied by an opponent's piece at the end of your move. The captured piece is sent to the waiting area and cannot re-enter the game until the player rolls a 12 or 25.

- Pieces of the same player that land on the same square can be placed side by side or, if possible, stacked on top of each other. If an opponent's piece lands on a square occupied by multiple pieces of the same player, all those pieces are captured. However, pieces are safe on "X" squares and cannot be captured. Opponent pieces can only share the same "X" square without capturing.
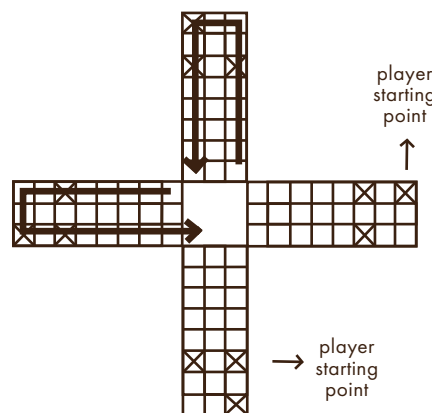
Origins of Pachisi

Although its exact origin is unclear, Pachisi shares similarities with various cultural games. It is believed to have originated in India and Central Asia, spreading to the Islamic world and Ottoman lands.

India and Central Asia

Pachisi's rules resemble the Indian game Pachisi, which dates back to the 6th century BCE. Pachisi is a race game where players advance their pieces using dice or similar tools. Pachisi likely traces its foundations to this game.

The Islamic World and the Ottoman Empire

An adapted version of Pachisi may have reached the Islamic world. Alongside games like chess and backgammon, Pachisi became a part of intellectual entertainment. The Ottomans adopted and popularized the game within their culture.

Ottoman Period Golden Age of Pachisi

Pachisi gained popularity between the 16th and 19th centuries in the Ottoman Empire. It became a cultural staple in coffeehouses across the Balkans, Anatolia, and the Arab world.

These coffeehouses served as social hubs where Pachisi was also popular as other games like backgammon, chess, and checkers. The luck-based aspect of the game added to the fun of the coffeehouse conversations.

Pachisi in the Palace and Among the People

The Ottoman court placed great importance on strategy games. In addition to chess and backgammon, Pachisi was also enjoyed by both courtiers and commoners. Like backgammon, Pachisi was played with stones and dice, making it easily portable and ideal for social gatherings.

Cultural and Historical Significance of Pachisi

Over time, Pachisi lost its popularity, as modern board and card games from Europe began replacing traditional games in Ottoman lands, particularly from the 19th century onwards. However, traces of Pachisi can still be found in games across the Balkans and Anatolia. Games such as Ludo and Parcheesi, which are adaptations of the Indian game Pachisi, share some features with Peçiç, and their similarities are striking.

Pachisi demonstrates that, in Ottoman society, games were not merely a form of entertainment but also a means of socializing, fostering competition, and developing strategic thinking skills. The element of luck introduced by the dice symbolized people's relationship with fate, while the strategic movement of the pieces highlighted the importance of foresight and planning.

Although Pachisi is not widely known today, it remains a significant part of gaming history. Its story offers valuable insights into the dynamics of Ottoman social life, the entertainment habits of its people, and the power of cultural exchange.

Reviving this nearly forgotten game holds great significance for preserving our cultural heritage.

Rules and Game Structure

Pachisi is typically played on a square board, with players moving their pieces using dice. Different versions of the game exist across various regions.

The primary objective of Pachisi is either to remove the opponent's pieces from the board or to be the first to reach a specific goal. As a result, the game blends strategy with elements of chance introduced by the dice.