

GEORGIA AND ARMENIA UNCOVERED

11 Days 2 Countries 10 Cities

Explore dramatic landscapes and the colourful history of the snow-capped Caucasus as you journey across the Eurasian crossroads of Georgia and Armenia and discover Europe's best kept secret.



THE ITINERARY

Day 1 Arrive Tbilisi (2 Nights)

A smorgasbord of architectural marvels overlook the cobbled streets of Georgia's capital. On arrival in Tbilisi, you'll be met at the airport and transferred to your hotel where you'll meet your Travel Director and fellow travellers for a Welcome Reception with drinks and Georgian-style fare this evening.

- ★ Hotel - Wyndham Grand
- ★ Included Meals - Welcome Reception

Day 2 Tbilisi Sightseeing

Take in the sights and sounds of the capital as you embark on a sightseeing tour of Tbilisi's Old Town. Your exploration begins at the 13th-century Metekhi Church, from there you'll wind your way along narrow streets and stroll past the patterned balconies and colourful façades that are so characteristic of this city. Ascend to the ancient Narikala Fortress by cable car next, soaking up the panoramic views of the city before delving into the legend of the Golden Fleece at the Georgian National Museum.

- ★ Included Meals - Breakfast

Day 3 Tbilisi – Mtskheta – Akhaseni

Leave Tbilisi behind as you head to the ancient capital of Mtskheta. Known as the religious centre of Georgia, you'll revel in the twin UNESCO World Heritage sites - the 6th-century Jvari Monastery and 11th-century Svetitskhoveli Cathedral. Delve into the city's Christian history which saw it granted the status of a 'Holy City', then retire to your hotel where you'll enjoy dinner.

- ★ Hotel - Wine Resort
- ★ Included Meals - Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 4 Akhasheni – Signaghi – Sagaredjo – Tbilisi (2 Nights)

Soak up the crisp air of the Caucasus Mountains as your journey continues to the fortified town of Signaghi in the heart of Georgia's wine region. Visit Bodbe Monastery, one of the country's most prominent pilgrimage sites, then head to Kakabeti village in Sagaredjo where you'll 'Connect With Locals' and enjoy an exclusive 'Be My Guest' lunch and wine tasting. Your host will treat you to some of the local wines, followed by a master class in Georgian bread baking and churchkhela sweets. Return to your hotel later for an evening at leisure.

- ★ Hotel - Wyndham Grand
- ★ Included Meals - Breakfast, Be My Guest

Day 5 Tbilisi – Uplistsikhe – Gori – Chardakhi – Tbilisi

Trace the ancient Silk Route and visit Uplistsikhe Cave Town where you'll find an ancient theatre, church and dwellings hewn directly out of the rocky hillside. Next, delve into the life of the former leader of the Soviet Union at the Joseph Stalin Museum in Gori, his birthplace. Later, 'Connect With Locals' at Iago's wine cellar where you'll sample some of the local wines produced using a traditional method which has been inscribed as a UNESCO heritage. Iago and his wife Marina regale guests with colourful stories of their life as wine producers in the area before you return to Tbilisi.

- ★ Included Meals - Breakfast

Day 6 Tbilisi – Haghpats – Fioletovo Village – Dilijan

Bid farewell to Georgia and cross the border into Armenia. Your first taste of this ancient land is the UNESCO-listed monastic complex of Haghpats featuring incredible works of medieval Armenian architecture. Against the backdrop of the forest-clad slopes of the Caucasus, you'll enjoy lunch in Dzoraget village, which lies on the banks of the Debed River. 'Dive Into Culture' by tasting Russian pancakes and homemade tea with a local in Fioletovo village, then head to Dilijan for your overnight stay.

- ★ Hotel - Best Western Plus Paradise
- ★ Included Meals - Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 7 Dilijan – Sevan Lake – Noraduz Village – Goris

A day of tranquil beauty awaits at Lake Sevan - your reward for an early start to the day. You'll see first-hand why it is deserving of its nickname 'The Blue Pearl of Armenia' as you bask in the peninsula's breathtaking scenery. Stop in the lakeside village of Noratus, with its impressive collection of Armenian cross-stones, then head to Yeghegnadzor spectacularly surrounded by the Zangezur Mountains. You'll savour a homemade lunch of local specialties before enjoying a quick photo stop in Karahunge, known as 'Armenia's Stonehenge'. Tonight you'll enjoy dinner at your hotel in Goris.

- ★ Hotel - Goris
- ★ Included Meals - Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 8 Tatev Complex – Ararat Valley and Khor Virap – Yerevan (3 Nights)

A thrilling start to the day sees us take a trip across the Wings of Tatev ropeway to the 'monastery on the edge of nothing'. Watch the epic scenery unfold as the world's longest aerial tramway delivers you to the 9th-century Apostolic monastery. Then, continue to Shinuhayr village where you'll 'Make A Difference' to the local community which makes a living from crafting traditional wool carpets. Enjoy lunch in a local family's home nearby before continuing to your final stop for the day, Khor Virap Monastery. Here St. Gregory the Illuminator was imprisoned for 14 years before he led Armenia to become the first country in the world to be declared a Christian nation. Admire the views of Mount Ararat, Armenia's national symbol, then head to Yerevan, the country's capital.

- ★ Hotel - Ramada by Wyndham
- ★ Included Meals - Breakfast, Lunch

Day 9 Yerevan Sightseeing and Free Time

Contemplate Yerevan's contrasting ancient culture and vibrant modern vibe as you delve into the city's history that spans over 2,800 years. Your sightseeing tour will start in Republic Square and continue to the Cascade Complex, home to the Gafesjian Centre which houses some of Armenia's most important works of art. Take the Great Cascade to Victory Park for incredible views of the heart of the city before your tour ends at the moving genocide memorial. The rest of the day is free to explore the city your way. Consider spending your afternoon on an Optional Experience to visit the Ruins of Zvartnots, or perhaps enjoy dinner in the former home of a famous Armenian painter.

- ★ Included Meals - Breakfast

Day 10 Cave Monastery Excursion

Today's excursion takes us to the UNESCO-listed Geghard Monastery. Hewn partly from the surrounding rock, Geghard is most famous for its incredible acoustics and spectacular natural beauty. You'll 'Dive Into Culture' during a moving performance of Armenian spiritual songs, or sharakans, performed by a live quintet, before a scenic drive brings you to Garni. Here you'll meet a local family who will teach you how to make Armenia's national flatbread lavash paired with cheese and greens. 'Connect With Locals' as you sample the brduj snack you've just made yourself and take a walk around your host's garden and orchard, learning about the different fruits grown in the area. On your return to Yerevan, enjoy delicious flavours of the legendary Armenian brandy during a local distillery visit. Tonight, you'll end your epic adventure through Georgia and Armenia with a Farewell Dinner in a traditional Armenian tavern, paired with folk songs and dance.

- ★ Included Meals - Breakfast, Farewell Dinner

Day 11 Depart Yerevan

After a whirlwind journey to two lands with dramatic pasts and vibrant multi-cultural legacies, it's time to say a fond farewell to new friends and prepare for your journey home. A transfer will take you to the airport for your return flight.

- ★ Included Meals - Breakfast

ABOUT THIS TRIP

What's included

- **10 NIGHTS** Accommodation
- **20 MEALS** 10 breakfasts, 5 lunches (including Be My Guest), 5 dinners
- **ON-TRIP TRANSPORT** Land transportation included. Where applicable, Intra-air between cities are not included.

The Trafalgar difference

- **CONNECT WITH LOCALS** Enjoy a master class in Georgian bread making and Churchkhela sweets at a 'Be My Guest' lunch and wine tasting in Kakabet village. (Day 4) Visit Iago's wine cellar in Chardakhi and sample local wines as Iago and his wife Marina regale you with tales of their lives as wine producers. (Day 5) Meet a local family in Garni who will teach you how to make lavash, paired with cheese and greens. (Day 10)
- **DIVE INTO CULTURE** Indulge in Russian pancakes and homemade tea with a local in Fioletovo village. (Day 6) Explore the UNESCO-listed Geghard Monastery and settle in for a moving performance of Armenian spiritual songs. (Day 10)
- **LOCAL SPECIALISTS** For included sightseeing in Tbilisi and Yerevan.
- **MAKE A DIFFERENCE** In Shinuhayr village your visit helps to fund the local community who make their living through the crafting of traditional wool carpets. (Day 8)

Sightseeing highlights

- VISIT Bodbe Monastery, Uplistsikhe Cave Town and Stalin's Museum in Gori
- VIEW Metekhi Church, Narikala Fortress, four UNESCO World Heritage sites including the Jvari Monastery, the Svetitskhoveli Cathedral and the monastic complex of Haghpat, Lake Sevan, the cross-stones in Noratus, the Wings of Tatev ropeway, Khor Virap Monastery, Mount Ararat, the Cascade Complex in Yerevan and the UNESCO-listed Geghard Monastery

Travel highlights

- ✓ Audio Headsets for flexible sightseeing
- ✓ Daily breakfast and up to half your evening meals
- ✓ Luxury air-conditioned coach with Wi-Fi in most countries or alternative transportation (such as rail journeys)
- ✓ Cherry-picked hotels, all tried and trusted
- ✓ Optional Experiences and free time
- ✓ All portage and restaurant gratuities
- ✓ Must-see sightseeing and surprise extras
- ✓ An expert Travel Director and professional Driver
- ✓ All hotel tips, charges and local taxes
- ✓ Handcrafted Highlights
- ✓ VIP entry to many sights