

## Archaeological Tour to Armenia

### Key information

Duration: 9 days / 8 nights

Best season: April - November

Tour type: Small group / individual (starting from 2 persons)

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### What's included:

airport transfers, accommodation in 3\* hotels (8 nights / double rooms), meals: breakfasts, lunches, farewell dinner, 1 bottle of water per day (0.5lt.), comfortable transport, English speaking guide's service for all day

### What's not included:

flights, visa fee, medical insurance

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### Itinerary in brief

Day 1 - Transfer to Yerevan - Yerevan City Tour - Matenadaran - History Museum of Armenia

Day 2 - Fortress-city of Metsamor - Holy Echmiadzin – Shengavit

Day 3 - Geghard Cave Monastery - Garni Pagan Temple - Erebuni Museum

Day 4 - Khor Virap Monastery - Noravank Monastery - Areni Caves - Goris

Day 5 - Tatev Monastery - Karahunj - Hermon Village

Day 6 - Muradsar Mountain - Hermon Village

Day 7 - Vardenyats Pass - Orbelians' Caravanserai - Lchashen Village - Yerevan

Day 8 - Agarak - Oshakan - Yerevan

Day 9 - Departure



## Detailed itinerary

### Day 1

After your arrival at Zvartnots airport, we will organize a transfer to the hotel for you. Your unforgettable journey will start from the ancient capital of Armenia – Yerevan. This city was founded in 782 BC and in the middle of the twentieth century the chief architect of Yerevan, Alexander Tamanyan approved the plan of the modern city, which we can contemplate today. Walking along the city streets, you will enjoy the warm atmosphere, friendly smiles of local people and unique coloring of this wonderful ancient city. On this day, you will also visit the Institute of Ancient Manuscripts, Matenadaran, which is a repository of both ancient Armenian and world's manuscripts. It offers the collection of more than 23,000 manuscripts that narrate about the ancient history of Armenian people and belong to the chroniclers of 10-13 centuries. After lunch, our tour will continue to the History Museum of Armenia, where you will plunge into the ancient times, walk through the dusty streets of the old city, and get acquainted with the everyday life of the 19th century inhabitants. The museum contains over 400,000 artefacts representing the history of the country.

**Overnight:** *Hotel in Yerevan*

**Meals:** *L*

### Day 2

The second day prepares lots of interesting things for archeology lovers. After breakfast, you will go to the fortress-city of Metsamor, which is famous for its archaeological finds. Archaeological excavations here started in 1965 and continue till these days. During the excavations different cultural layers were found, which date to the Eneolithic, three periods of the Bronze Age, the period of iron developing and Middle Ages. The most famous finds are: agate frog-plummet and carnelian seal with Egyptian hieroglyphs belonging to the Babylonian kings. There is a Historical and Archaeological Museum in the city, which will introduce you to different archaeological finds. Next, the tour will continue to Holy Echmiadzin (religious center of all Armenians), you'll see the ruins of Zvartnots temple (7th century, UNESCO World Heritage Site), that was a miracle of its time. and after a short lunch a wonderful journey to Shengavit is waiting for you. Shengavit settlement is one of the most important archaeological sites of the early Bronze Age period in Armenia. It consists of four cultural and archaeological levels. In this territory, many interesting ancient things were found, including a variety of tools and household.

**Overnight:** *Hotel in Yerevan*

**Meals:** *B, L*

### Day 3

The third day begins with a tour to Garni and Geghard. Cave monastery of Geghard is an example of medieval Armenian architecture of the 13th century and is included in the UNESCO World Heritage List. After a trip to the monastery, the tour continues to the village of Garni, where the temple Garni built in the Hellenistic style in 66 AD is located. In the village of Garni, we will organize a delicious lunch, after which we are going to visit the Erebuni Museum - Museum of History of Yerevan. Crossing the threshold of the museum, you will begin an exciting and unforgettable journey through time. It offers different exhibits and valuable archaeological finds that were discovered during excavations of the fortress of Erebuni. Leaving the museum, you can buy some copies of various exhibits and take home not only unforgettable memories, but also some pieces of cultural peculiarities of Armenia. On the territory of the museum, the remains of the Erebuni fortress are located. You'll see how people lived in 782 BC, as well as walk through the different rooms of the fortress.

**Overnight:** *Hotel in Yerevan*

**Meals:** *B, L*



#### **Day 4**

On the fourth day the excursion will start from the south of Armenia. Here, about 40 km from Yerevan, on the site of the ancient capital of Armenia, stands the monastery of Khor Virap. Near the monastery, there is an underground prison, where for 14 years St. Gregory the Enlightener was imprisoned because of his faith. Nowhere will you find such a beautiful view of the Biblical Mount Ararat. Here you can also see the ruins of the ancient city of Artashat. Excavations have discovered amazing things in this area: coins, stamps, the remains of the temple, citadel, and markets. Farther the tour continues to the Noravank Monastery, and then after delicious dinner, to the Areni Caves. Archeological excavations have started here since 2007, and lots of materials dated to 4200-3500 BC have been found. The greatest interest and popularity have the findings of the most ancient shoe and the most ancient winery in the world. This winery includes a tub for fermentation, a wine press and vessels for wine storage. It is suggested that the winery is 1,000 years older than the one found in 1963 on the West Bank.

***Overnight:** Hotel in Goris*

***Meals:** B, L*

#### **Day 5**

After a small breakfast in Goris our way continue to Tatev – the pearl of Armenian medieval architecture. Here, anyone who wishes can take the longest aerial tramway in the world, which extends over the gorge Vorotan (depth – 320 meters). A little later, after a delicious lunch, we will visit an interesting and surprising place - Zorats Carer (Karahunj). Zorats Carer is a prehistoric archaeological site, where at an altitude of 1770 meters above sea level, an ancient megalithic complex is located. Just from the road you will see a series of giant red-brown monoliths that stretch from the south to the north, and form a perfect circle in the center. It has been proven that Karahunj once served as an observatory, built in VI millennium BC. In many stelae there are holes that correspond to the location of stars in the sky 7.5 thousand years ago. Hence our way lies to Hermon, where you will stay for the night.

***Overnight:** Hotel in Hermon*

***Meals:** B, L*

#### **Day 6**

The sixth day starts with breakfast at the hotel and then continues to the mountain Muradsar. You will have a long and unforgettable journey in road-off jeeps. Here, on the cliffs of the Mount Muradsar, about a hundred amazing petroglyphs were found. In addition to studying the petroglyphs, we will hold a picnic here and go back to the hotel in Hermon (26 km). In the hotel “Lucy Tour” you can have a good rest and a good time. There is a billiard, spa salon, sauna, and various other services for a pleasant and comfortable leisure.

***Overnight:** Hotel in Hermon*

***Meals:** B*

#### **Day 7**

The seventh day also has a lot of interesting things for you. First we will visit Vardenyats Pass, which is located at an altitude of 2410m. It offers a beautiful view of the surroundings. In ancient times, the Great Silk Road passed here, and Orbelians’ Caravanserai provided caravans with lodging. Next we continue our way to the village Lchashen, in the eastern part of which there is a historic district - one of the most important archaeological sites in Armenia. Here, a few decades ago, there was a decrease in water level in Lake Sevan, and archaeologists discovered the amazing ancient tombs. Now at this territory you can see a complex of archaeological sites, which includes a cyclopean fortress, burial grounds, various funerary monuments, cromlechs and stone boxes. After studying the monuments, we will return to Yerevan, where you will have a rest at the hotel.

***Overnight:** Hotel in Yerevan*



*Meals: B, L*

### **Day 8**

On the last day, we will go to the historical and cultural reserve Agarak that should not be missed by any archeology lover. This settlement Agarak is located 25 km from Yerevan. Since 2001, archaeological excavations are carried out here, which showed that the area began to be settled in the first quarter of the third millennium. During large-scale studies different ancient materials were discovered such as remains of ancient streets, miscellaneous goods of Van Kingdom, tombs, pottery of the 8-6 century BC, as well as coins of the Hellenistic and Roman periods. After the tour, a wonderful picnic in the fresh air will be organized for you, and then our way continues to the village Oshakan. Here the tomb of great Armenian enlightener and creator of alphabet Mesrop Mashtots is located. And next to the grave is the church of St. Mesrop Mashtots. After the tour, we will return to the city, where you will have a great opportunity to visit shops and buy different souvenirs for family and friends. And at the end of the day, we will arrange a farewell dinner with live music for you.

*Overnight: Hotel in Yerevan*

*Meals: B, L, D*

### **Day 9**

Transfer to the airport and departure.



### **Booking terms and conditions**

Once we received your application, confirmed all tour details with you, we will send a deposit invoice. After the deposit of 50-100 euro per person (depending on the tour price) is received, we will start your hotel reservation and other service booking and will send your Tour Voucher with all the trip details.

### **Payment Terms**

After you have booked the tour, it is necessary to make a non-refundable deposit of 50-100 euros, which will provide our coordinators with the possibility to start organizing a trip (hotel reservation, food, transportation, etc.). Final payment could be made after your arrival in Armenia. We reserve the right to cancel your booking and apply the relevant cancellation charges (detailed below) if we do not receive all payments at the due time.

### **Cancellation of the tour**

If you or a member of your group wants to cancel the tour, please, inform our company as soon as possible in writing form. Please, note that the prepayment (50-100 euros) is non-refundable, however, you can use it throughout the year and book another tour. In this case, our company will have to charge an extra 100 euros for re-booking the hotel.

### **Rights and obligations**

Tours provided by our company are planned for many months before its inception and are not the subject of change or cancellation. Under the obligation of forced circumstances (weather, holidays) we can make some changes in the itinerary, however, all that relates to services and attractions will remain unchanged.

Please note, that our tours require a minimum number of participants – 2 persons. We reserve the right to cancel the trip, if any tour will not have the minimum number of participants. We will inform you about the cancellation of the tour no later than 30 days before the start and will do the full refund of the amount paid, including the prepayment.

We also request immediately and promptly report all complaints and any claims during the tour. If possible, all problems will be solved. If the tourist does not report any complaint, the compensation will not be implemented.

Please, also note that the company AraraTour is not liable for services not included in the tour price. Our responsibility is limited only to the extent provided by our tour.

Force majeure or any other event which is beyond our control and which is not preventable by reasonable diligence on our part frees both parties from liability or obligation. In case of Force majeure, we don't issue any refund.

### **Insolvency or bankruptcy insurance**

Tour operator Arara guarantees the refund of clients' money for unfulfilled services even in the case of company's own insolvency or bankruptcy.

