



Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan in 17 days

Key information

Duration: 17 days / 16 nights

Best season: May - October

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

What's included:

Transfers from/to the airport, accommodation for 16 nights (3* hotels, double rooms), breakfast, 1 bottle of water per day (0.5lt.), English speaking guide services, comfortable vehicle during the tour, all entrance fees as per program, Tatev Cable car ticket

What's not included:

flights, visa fee, medical insurance, lunches & dinners

Itinerary in brief

- Day 1 - Arrival - City Tour in Yerevan - Echmiadzin - Zvartnots
- Day 2 - Garni - Geghard - Yerevan
- Day 3 - Khor Virap - Noravank - Karahunj - Goris
- Day 4 - Tatev - Jermuk
- Day 5 - Selim Pass - Sevan - Dilijan
- Day 6 - Lori Fortress - Stepanavan - Haghpat
- Day 7 - Armenia-Georgia border - Tbilisi City Tour
- Day 8 - Ananuri - Gudauri - Gergeti
- Day 9 - Vardzia - Khertvisi Fortress - Akhaltsikhe
- Day 10 - Rabati - Sapara - Borjomi - Kutaisi
- Day 11 - Bagrati - Sataplia - Gelati - Tbilisi
- Day 12 - Kakheti - Batonis Tsikhe - Tsinandali - Sighnaghi
- Day 13 - Georgia-Azerbaijan border - Sheki City Tour
- Day 14 - Sheki - Shamakhi - Lahij - Baku
- Day 15 - Baku City Tour
- Day 16 - Yanar Dag - Ateshgah Temple
- Day 17 - Departure



Itinerary

Introduction

Admire the breathtaking scenes of ancient monasteries that standstill even after so many centuries, visit the old wine town of Armenia to try variety of wines made of pomegranate, apricot and berries, take pictures of Biblical Mount Ararat when visiting Khor Virap Monastery as nowhere else the mount has such a magnificent view, have a look at the cave where the world oldest leather shoe has recently been found. Enjoy the incredibly beautiful scenery of Mount Kazbek from the hill. Stroll around Signaghi – “the town of love” famous for its architecture in the style of southern Italian classicism, try the famous unique wine in Khareba winery. There is no doubt everyone will be eager to see a Burning Mountain in Azerbaijani (Yanar Dag), a natural gas fire which blazes continuously on a hillside on the Absheron Peninsula. Enjoy a lovely walk in Gobustan National park along the Caspian coast. Feel the real power and excellence of the Caucasus.

Day 1

After arrival, you will be transferred to your hotel and checked in. City tour around Yerevan. Visit Matenadaran institute museum, which houses over 17,000 ancient and medieval manuscripts. Stop at the Food Market of Yerevan where you will have an opportunity to wander through the aisles of locally grown fresh fruit and vegetables. Trip to Echmiadzin town, the religious centre of all Armenians around the world. Visit Echmiadzin Cathedral. On the way back you will stop at the ruins of Zvartnots temple (7th century, UNESCO World Heritage Site), that was a miracle of its time.

Overnight: Hotel in Yerevan

Day 2

Trip to the scenic canyon of the Azat River to Geghard Cave Monastery listed by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site. Tour to Hellenistic Garni temple built in 77 AD, dedicated to the Armenian God of the Sun Mitra. Visit the Museum of Armenian History where you will have a fascinating journey through the rich history of Armenia.

Overnight: Hotel in Yerevan

Meals: Breakfast

Day 3

Trip to the south of Armenia to Khor Virap Monastery located at the foot of Biblical Mount Ararat. The tour will continue through a narrow canyon to the valley of red rocks where Noravank Monastery is located. En route, you will visit wine factory to taste local wine made of the unique grape sort “Areni”. Stop at Karahunj, a 6,000-years-old observatory, known as the “Armenian Stonehenge”. The last tour destination is Goris town encompassed by rocky caves and mountains.

Overnight: Hotel in Goris

Meals: Breakfast

Day 4

Trip to the pearl of Armenian Medieval architecture, the Monastery and the University of Tatev. The monastery can be reached by the longest cable car in the world which stretches over the 320 meter-deep Vorotan River Canyon. Stop at natural bridge named “Devil’s Bridge” at the bottom of the deep canyon. Next stop is the resort town of Jermuk, famous for its hot mineral springs and scenic landscape. Walkthrough the Arpa River Canyon to admire the Jermuk Waterfall.

Overnight: Hotel in Jermuk

Meals: Breakfast

Day 5

The trip along the part of Great Silk Road towards the Selim Pass. Stop at 14th century Selim Caravansary – one of the most well-preserved hostels along the ancient Great Silk Road. En route, you will be able to admire the azure waters of Lake Sevan located 2000 m above the sea.

Overnight: Hotel in Dilijan

Meals: Breakfast



Day 6

Morning trip to Lori region. Here you will see the ruins of the ancient fortress of Lori which was once the centre of Lori Kingdom. Visit Stepanavan Dendropark – Armenia’s first botanical garden. 15 hectares of its territory are planted with exotic trees and the rest 20 hectares are covered by natural wild forest. It is not by chance that this amazing place is considered one of the most beautiful corners of Armenia – once here, you will feel like in a fairy tale. Trip to the north of the country to visit Haghpat Monastery, which is listed by UNESCO as World Heritage Sites. Free evening in Haghpat village.

Overnight: *Hotel in Haghpat*

Meals: *Breakfast*

Day 7

Transfer to Armenia-Georgia border. You will meet our Georgian representatives on the border and then head to Tbilisi. Tour to the open-air Museum of Ethnography located on the territory of Turtle Lake. The museum exhibits traditional houses and farm buildings which have the architecture typical to different Georgian regions. Stroll around Meidani Square which was the part of the famous caravansary. Visit the Assumption Church located on the picturesque hill in the historic district of Metekhi. Trip up the hill by the cable car to Narikala Fortress which is an ancient symbol of Tbilisi, then going down by foot via Botanical Street and visit Jumah Mosque. Tour to Abanotubani that are famous sulfuric baths - bath complex (XVII-XIX cc.), standing on the natural sulfur springs. The last tour destination is Mtatsminda Mount located in the city centre and is a true symbol of Tbilisi.

Overnight: *Hotel in Tbilisi*

Meals: *Breakfast*

Day 8

Drive to Ananuri well-preserved castle located on the shore of the Zhinvali reservoir. Once it was the defensive fortress of the feudal era. Stop in Gudauri resort town to admire amazing views of the mountains Stop to visit Sour waters of Vedza Visit to Gergeti Church located at an altitude of 2170 m not far from legendary Mount Kabegi. From the top of the hill opens an amazing view which cannot be expressed in words. The last tour destination will be to the Dariali Gorge and the church of Transfiguration. Return to Tbilisi.

Overnight: *Hotel in Tbilisi*

Meals: *Breakfast*

Day 9

Trip through Javakheti region to Vardzia cave town Stop at Paravani Lake which is the largest in the country. Near the lake, you will visit the monastery of St. Nino which is famous for its small dairy managed by local nuns. Here you will find various unique kinds of cheeses that cannot be found anywhere else in Georgia. Climb up the hill to Khertvisi Fortress (X-century) for making memorable photos. The last destination will be Vardzia – cave monastery complex that dates back to the XII century. It consists of thousands of caves carved out in the rock. Stop in Akhaltsikhe town.

Overnight: *Hotel in Akhaltsikhe*

Meals: *Breakfast*

Day 10

Visit Rabati Fortress which is a recently renovated huge castle complex of Akhaltsikhe. It dates back to the XIII century. A short trip to Sapara Monastery hidden in the mountain forests. It is located about 11 km from Akhaltsikhe. Stop in Borjomi resort town to try its world-famous mineral waters just from the spring in the Mineral Water Park. Trip to Kutaisi – the second largest city in Georgia.

Overnight: *Hotel in Kutaisi*

Meals: *Breakfast*

Day 11

Sightseeing tour in Kutaisi Visit to Bagrati Cathedral (UNESCO object) which is located on a hill overlooking the entire town. Visit Sataplia is the national reserve located in the amazing mountains. The word “Sataplia” means the honey place from Georgian. The excavations showed that there are preserved relics, karst caves and tracks of dinosaurs which lived in



the Mesozoic era millions of years ago. On the territory of Sataplia preserve three comparatively small caves have been discovered and studied recently. Visit the Middle-aged Gelati Monastery, which is under UNESCO protection. The last excursion will be at Motsameta Monastery located on the hill under the River Tskhaltsitela - Red River. Drive to Tbilisi.

Overnight: *Hotel in Tbilisi*

Meals: *Breakfast*

Day 12

Trip to the picturesque region of Kakheti, through Gombori pass and enjoy the views. Visit Telavi (the centre of Kakheti and winemaking) and see 9 hundred years old tree. Batonis Tsikhe Fortress of the most respectable Georgian king Erekle the II. Excursion around Tsinandali estate that once belonged to Chavchavadzes dynasty. The estate is known for its amazing labyrinth-gathered with exotic trees in it and with cellars, where the unique collection of Georgian and European wine is preserved. Stroll around beautiful Signaghi, “the town of love”, famous for its architecture in the style of southern Italian classicism. Drive back to Tbilisi.

Overnight: *Hotel in Kakheti area*

Meals: *Breakfast, Dinner*

Day 13

Transfer to Georgia-Azerbaijan border. We will meet and greet you at the border, and then you will departure for Sheki city. Firstly, you will check in your hotel in Sheki, and then you will have a sightseeing tour around Sheki. You will visit the Upper Town, the magnificent Palace of Sheki Khans and the Craft Museum. Built-in 1797 as a summer residence for Muhammad Hasan Khan, the Palace of Sheki Khans is a masterpiece of lavish decoration. Both the exterior and interior decorations of the palace embody the architectural glamour of the ancient Sheki Khanate. Continue to Museum of carpets (there are various big rooms with pottery, silk embroidery, and national costumes, jewellery) Shebeke craft workshop, Sheki Bazaar, and the local sweet bakery. We advise you to try famous Sheki sweet baklava – the pride of Sheki population. After a long day delving into the many treasures of Sheki you will return back to the hotel to have a rest. Then you will have dinner in one of the best local restaurants.

Overnight: *Hotel in Sheki*

Meals: *Breakfast, Dinner*

Day 14

After breakfast at your hotel in Sheki, whilst travelling through Gabala in the north of Azerbaijan you will take the time to experience a small but significant part of the religious tolerance within the country. First, you will visit the Church of the Udi, near Gabala, in the village of Nij. This small church is special. It belongs to the native people of the Caucasus – the Udi people. There are only a few thousand Udi people in the world today and the majority, approx. 4.000, live in this area in Azerbaijan. Today they practise Orthodox Christianity and you will be welcomed with their kindness to see their church, renovated and used. You will then head to the village of Lahij, a notable place in Azerbaijan, with its authentic handicraft’s traditions, particularly related to copper. The majority of the population speaks the Tati language - an ancient Iranian language. During the Medieval Period, this beautiful village located in the mountains became an important centre of craftsmen in Azerbaijan. During the visit, you will see the magnificent items produced in Lahij and enjoy the amazing mountain view. The tour will continue to Samakhi city and have a sightseeing of historical Juma Mosque of Shamakhi. On the way to Baku, visit Diri Baba Mausoleum in Maraza village.

Overnight: *Hotel in Baku*

Meals: *Breakfast*

Day 15

This day you will have a tour around Baku Old City. You will visit the legendary Zoroastrian Maiden Tower of the 5th c. Then you will walk to the old bazaar. The entire old town is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and during the city tour you will visit the oldest Multani Caravansary, the Haji Banu Hamam of the 15th c., the Juma Mosque (Friday Mosque), as well as the Shirvanshahs’ Palace (the most striking example of the medieval palace structures in Azerbaijan, dating to the middle of 15th century), antique carpet shops and museum. After the Old City Tour enjoy a beautiful drive out of Baku to visit the Gobustan National Park. You will travel 64 km southwest of Baku along with the Caspian shore. The tour will



start from Gobustan Museum where you will see ancient human bones, work tools used in back to thousand years ago during the Mesolithic Period. Then, you will advance to the mountain in order to see real Rock Paintings in the open-air museum. You will also get a chance to marvel at the Mud Volcanoes in the Gobustan Reserve, which is home to almost half of the world's mud volcanoes. At the end of the Gobustan tour, you will return to Baku.

Overnight: *Hotel in Baku*

Meals: *Breakfast*

Day 16

After the breakfast, you will head to Yanar Dag (meaning Burning Mountain in Azerbaijani), a natural gas fire which blazes continuously on a hillside on the Absheron Peninsula. The Yanar Dag flame burns fairly steadily, as it involves a steady seep of gas from the subsurface, and it is never extinguished. You will enjoy this natural phenomenon of the land of fire. Then you will visit the castle-town religious Temple of Ateshgah, also called the «Fire Temple of Baku». Based on Persian and Indian inscriptions, the temple was used as a Hindu, Sikh, and Zoroastrian place of worship. It was a pilgrimage and philosophical centre of Zoroastrians from Northwestern Indian Subcontinent, who were involved in trade with the Caspian area via the famous "Grand Trunk Road". During the visit, your guide will tell you the story of the ancient temple. Visit the Centre of Heydar Aliyev, designed by Zaha Hadid.

Overnight: *Hotel in Baku*

Meals: *Breakfast*

Day 17

Transfer to the airport, departure.

Meals: *Breakfast*





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.

