

# Best of Armenia and Georgia

## Key information

Duration: 13 days / 12 nights

Best season: Year round

Tour type: Individual (starting from 2 pax)

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## What's included:

Airport transfers, accommodation in hotels 12 nights (4\* hotels with free Wi-Fi double room), breakfast, lunches, welcome dinner in each country, all transfers in air-conditioned vehicles, English speaking guide service for all days, all admission fees, Lavash master class in Garni, Gata master class in Chiva, wine tasting in Areni, 4-wheel drive vehicle for Gergeti Trinity Church, wine tasting in Signaghi, 1 bottle of water per day (0.5lt.), 24-hour office support Armenia, Georgia

## What's not included:

Flights, visa fee, medical insurance

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## Itinerary in brief

Day 1 - Arrival - Yerevan City Tour

Day 2 - Echmiadzin - Garni - Geghard - Yerevan

Day 3 - Khor Virap - Old Bridge Winery - Noravank - Goris

Day 4 - Tatev - Selim Pass - Hayravank - Sevan - Dilijan

Day 5 - Dilijan - Fioletovo - Haghpat - Sadakhlo border - Tbilisi City Tour

Day 6 - Ananuri - Gudauri - Tbilisi

Day 7 - Mtskheta - Jvari - Château Mukhrani - Kutaisi

Day 8 - Martvili - Prometheus Cave - Gelati - Akhaltsikhe

Day 9 - Vardzia - Rabati Castle - Uplistsikhe - Tbilisi

Day 10 - Kakheti - Tsinandali - Telavi - Signaghi

Day 11 - Tour to Signaghi

Day 12 - Free time

Day 13 - Departure



## Detailed itinerary

### Day 1

After your arrival at the airport, you will be transferred to Yerevan. You will have a city tour around Yerevan, the ancient capital of Armenia, which was founded in 782 BC. Armenians are proud that Yerevan is 29 years older than Rome. During the city tour, you will walk around the centre of the city and visit Cascade, Opera and Ballet theatre, Mashtots Avenue, and Republic Square. In the evening you will have a welcome dinner in a traditional restaurant with folk show.

**Overnight:** Hotel in Yerevan

**Meals:** Lunch, Dinner

**Duration:** 5-6 hours

**Length:** 40 km

### Day 2

A short morning drive will take you to Echmiadzin town – the religious centre of all Armenians around the world. Hereafter the adoption of Christianity in 301 AD one of the first Christian cathedrals in the world – Echmiadzin Cathedral was built in 303-310 AD. It is the seat of the Supreme Patriarch of the Catholicos of all Armenians. The cathedral keeps an important religious relic – the Holy Lance spear. In 2000 Echmiadzin Cathedral was listed as a UNESCO site. You'll see the ruins of Zvartnots temple (7th century, UNESCO World Heritage Site), that was a miracle of its time. This day you will also have a 1-hour drive to the Canyon of Azat River. Our destination is Geghard Monastery. This unique monastery is carved into nearby rocks and the surrounding cliffs compose a great part of it. In 2000 it became a UNESCO Heritage site. The trip leads us to Garni village, well known for its Garni temple – the only surviving example of Hellenistic architecture in the region. Here you will have an opportunity to see the demonstration of Armenian national bread lavash baking.

**Overnight:** Hotel in Yerevan

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

**Duration:** 6-7 hours

**Length:** 120 km

### Day 3

The day will start with a trip to Ararat Province where proudly stands one of the holiest sites in Armenia – Khor Virap Monastery. You will hike up a small hill to discover the monastery and enjoy the breathtaking view on Biblical Mount Ararat. Continue to Old Bridge winery and try the local wine. Lunch will be organized in the same winery for you to feel the whole spectrum of Armenian hospitality. The tour will continue through a narrow canyon to the valley of red rocks, right where Noravank Monastery is located – built in the 13th century it is a masterpiece of Armenian architect Momik. On the territory of the monastery, amazing khachkars are scattered all around – crosstones designed by Momik. The tour will end with a visit to Goris town for an overnight.

**Overnight:** Hotel in Goris

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

**Duration:** 7-8 hours

**Length:** 240 km

### Day 4

The day is dedicated to the pearl of Armenian Medieval architecture, the Monastery and the University of Tatev. Here you have a chance to ride on the longest cable car in the world 5,7 km over the 320 meter-deep Vorotan River Canyon. You will continue to Selim pass which was a section of the Great Silk Road. Stop at 14th century Selim Caravanserai – one of the most well-preserved hostels along the ancient Great Silk Road. Continue to Gegharkunik Province best known for



amazing Lake Sevan. It is one of the highest freshwater lakes in the world located at an altitude of 1900 meters above sea level. Here you will have a stop in Hayravank Monastery. We continue our trip further north to Tavush Province. Here we have a stop at the cosy resort town of Dilijan known for its arts and crafts as well as picturesque lush nature and healing air. Here you will have an overnight.

**Overnight:** *Hotel in Dilijan*

**Meals:** *Breakfast, Lunch*

**Duration:** *9-10 hours*

**Length:** *340 km*

## **Day 5**

In the morning you will have a walk in the old part of Dilijan and enjoy the local atmosphere. Further visit Russian Molokan village Fioletovo. After an excursion head to Haghpat monastery listed as UNESCO object. Drive to the Armenian-Georgian (Sadakhlo) border. Meet your Georgian representatives and continue to Tbilisi for a city tour. Visit Tsminda Sameba – the main church of Georgian Orthodox Church and the highest temple in Georgia. Continue to the historic district of Metekhi, where you will see the Assumption Church located on the picturesque hill. Going up to the Narikala Fortress, situated on a hill. You will reach the fortress by the cable car, and at the top, a spectacular view of the city opens. Going down on foot. Excursion to the sulfuric baths – famous royal bath complex (XVII-XIX cc), standing on the warm natural sulfur springs. The way will continue to Juma Mosque located on Botanical Street. Excursion to Sioni church - one of the greatest relics of Georgia is kept there - the cross of St. Patriarchate. In the evening you will head to a traditional restaurant and have dinner accompanied by Georgian traditional show.

**Overnight:** *Hotel in Tbilisi*

**Meals:** *Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

**Duration:** *8-9 hours*

**Length:** *240 km*

## **Day 6**

After breakfast at the hotel, you will drive to Ananuri Fortress – a well-preserved castle on the shore of the Zhinvali Reservoir, the former defensive fortress of the feudal era. Have Stop in Gudauri – popular ski resort which is beautiful in any season. Here you will see the Balcony dedicated to the treaty of Georgievsk and enjoy the amazing views to the mountains that open from here. After the 5-minute drive, you will visit Sour waters of Vedza. The place offers picturesque scenes. Visit the Trinity Church (Gergeti) situated at an altitude of 2170 m at the foot of Mount Kazbek. The church was built in the XIV century and is the only cross-domed church in the historic Georgian province Khevi. From the top of the hill opens the incredibly beautiful scenery.

**Overnight:** *Hotel in Tbilisi*

**Meals:** *Breakfast, Lunch*

**Duration:** *7-8 hours*

**Length:** *250 km*

## **Day 7**

After breakfast, you will have a short ride to Mtskheta which was the first capital of Georgia from the 3rd century BC to the 5th century AD. The town is considered the religious centre of Georgia. Here you will go up the hill to the Jvari Monastery – the amazing symbol of the Georgian church architecture. According to the legend, at the site of the monastery St. Nino established one of her three crosses. The excursion will continue to Svetitskhoveli Cathedral – the first and the main church in Georgia. The tour will end with a visit to Château Mukhrani Winery where you will wine tasting and master class of different Georgian dishes preparation. Drive to Kutaisi and accommodation at the hotel.



**Overnight:** Hotel in Kutaisi

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

**Duration:** 7-8 hours

**Length:** 280 km

### Day 8

In the morning you will have a city tour around Kutaisi. The tour will continue to the Prometheus Cave – one of the most unique in Europe. It is characterized by impressive reliefs of stalactites and stalagmites and a variety of underground rivers. Excursion to the monastery of Gelati. This monastery is a living symbol of Georgia's Golden Age and is protected by UNESCO. You will also have a visit to Martvili Canyon - the hidden gem of Samegrelo Region in western Georgia. Drive to Akhaltsikhe and accommodation at the hotel.

**Overnight:** Hotel in Akhaltsikhe

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

**Duration:** 8-9 hours

**Length:** 320 km

### Day 9

In the morning, after delicious breakfast at the hotel, you will start your tour with an excursion to Vardzia – a unique cave complex of the Golden Age (XII -XIII centuries), the first cave of which was created during the reign of Queen Tamar's father, George III. In ancient times, the complex served as a refuge for civilians. On the territory of Vardzia, there is a functioning monastery and temples. Continue to Rabati Castle – a medieval structure in Akhaltsikhe which is dated back to the XIII century. Recently renovated Rabati Castle was reopened in Akhaltsikhe in August 2012 and now is the main attraction of the town. On the way to Tbilisi, you will visit the cave town of Uplistsikhe. This ancient cave town, carved into the volcanic rock of Kvernaki ridge, is one of the first in Georgia and is famous for its three-thousand-year history. Once there were houses, streets, churches, public buildings and squares.

**Overnight:** Hotel in Tbilisi

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

**Duration:** 9-10 hours

**Length:** 350 km

### Day 10

In the morning you will travel to the east of the country, to Kakheti – the main winemaking region of Georgia. Here you will visit Tsinandali estate which is the patrimony of the famous Georgian dynasty – Chavchavadze. The estate is known for its amazing labyrinth planted with exotic trees in it and cellars, where the unique collection of Georgian and European wine is preserved. Next, you will have a short trip to Telavi – the centre of the Kakheti region. Telavi is well-known for its delightful landscapes. The day will end with a tour around the famous winery Khareba. Here you will have a degustation of local wines, as well as a master class on baking Georgian bread shoti and some national sweets.

**Overnight:** Hotel in Signaghi

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

**Duration:** 7-8 hours

**Length:** 250 km

### Day 11

The day will start with a stroll around Signaghi – “the town of love” famous for its architecture in the style of southern Italian classicism. The town has recently undergone significant restoration and infrastructural improvement, rendering





Signaghi a must-see destination in Georgia. The tour will continue to Bodbe monastery.

The cathedral was constructed in IV century AD, on the tomb of St. Nino who introduced Christianity in Georgia. One of the biggest shrines of the monastery is a miraculous icon of Mother Mary of Iveria. You will have free time in Signaghi.

**Overnight:** Hotel in Signaghi

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

**Duration:** 7-8 hours

**Length:** 250 km

### Day 12

In the morning head back to Tbilisi and have free time to enjoy your last day of the trip.

**Overnight:** Hotel in Tbilisi

**Meals:** Breakfast

**Duration:** 1.5 hours

**Length:** 120 km

### Day 13

Transfer to the airport, 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 on the spot. 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.

