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PRESTIGE

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GEORGIA & ARMENIA EXPLORER

11 DAY ESCORTED GROUP TOUR

From Yerevan to Tbilisi, uncover the spirit of the wild Caucasus and the people who have lived here for thousands of years on this in-depth journey.



FEATURING

Yerevan • Garni • Geghard • Agarak • Gyumri • Borjomi
Svaneti • Mestia • Kutaisi • Tbilisi

11 DAYS ESCORTED GROUP TOUR

5 October 2019 - £2,379 per person

Single supplement £350

Nestled between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea, the countries of the Caucasus are home to Europe's largest mountain, Elbrus, where the titan Prometheus was imprisoned by Zeus. Standing at approximately 19,000 feet, this imposing dormant volcano looms over some of the oldest Christian lands in the world. Georgia & Armenia sit on a crossroad of Christian and Muslim cultures and because of this, these highland countries have a long and bloody history of conflict. They boast dramatic alpine landscapes which hide equally dramatic stories, from ancient times all the way through to the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Our group has the chance to journey from one of the world's oldest inhabited cities, Yerevan, to vibrant Tbilisi. Along the way, we will see such highlights as stunning frescoes in Gelati monastery, the rugged landscape of Vardzia cave-monasteries, and a Hellenistic temple at Gami, to mention a few. A traditional way of life still pervades through the valleys of these countries and our group will have plenty of opportunities to admire the folk culture and cuisine hidden behind every mountain - and with one of the world's oldest viticultures (dating back almost 8000 years), this cultural feast is likely to be washed down with a glass or two of fine wine.



TOUR ITINERARY

Day 1 (D)

Arrival. Transfer to Yerevan and enjoy a snack dinner at the hotel.

Overnight: Yerevan

Day 2 (B, L, D)

Explore Yerevan, one of the world's oldest inhabited cities. Visit the main sites the city has to offer, including Matenadaran, which holds on of the world's richest depositories of medieval manuscripts. Drive into the Kotayk Region with photo stops at some stunning sites. The Arch of Charents overlooks Yerevan and Mt Ararat. Gami is a Hellenistic temple, and Geghard is a rock-hewn monastery.

Overnight: Yerevan

Day 3 (B, L)

Drive to the region of Ararat to visit Khor Virap Monastery. From modern Armenia, this is the closest point to view Biblical Mt Ararat, the supposed resting place of Noah's Ark. From here, continue to the region of Vayots Dzor, well known for its centuries old winemaking traditions where the village of Areni has become the flagship of Armenia's burgeoning wine industry today

Overnight: Yerevan

Day 4 (B, L, D)

Pass through scenic Ashtarak town for a coffee stop before continuing to mystical Agarak, its landscape dotted with large rock and stone carved complexes, the majority of which relate to early Bronze Age settlements. Stop at the funerary complex in Aghdzk before lunch. This afternoon, explore Gyumri, which possesses the largest collection of authentic 18-19th century Armenian architecture.

Overnight: Gyumri

Day 5 (B, L, D)

Continue across the Javakheti Plateau to admire 6,000 year old megaliths, followed by migrating birds at Lake Apri. The arguable highlight of today is a visit to the impressive 12th century Vardzia cave settlement. Here, explore a warren of cave dwellings, monasteries and subterranean passageways redolent of the past.

Overnight: Borjomi

Day 6 (B, L, D)

Visit one of the last remaining qvevri makers, Zaliko Bojadze, continuing the traditions of crafting these amphora-esque gigantic clay vessels.

Overnight: Mestia

Day 7 (B, L, D)

Visit the nearby Museum of History, which offers a small but intriguing exhibition of archaeology, ethnography and Christian art. Continue to the Becho Valley for a short walk followed by a family meal of traditional Svan cuisine, and visit an original 12th century Svan house.

Overnight: Mestia

Day 8 (B, L, D)

Visit the scenic UNESCO site of the Gelati academy and monastery. Dating back to the 12th century, the monastery boasts some of the most stunning frescoes in all of Georgia.

Overnight: Kutaisi

Day 9 (B, L, D)

Photo stop at the monolith Katskhi Monastery before stopping in the famous mining town of Chiatura, one of the soviet era's most industrial cities. Continue to the highland region of Imereti to explore the heart of Georgia's ancient viticulture in some 17th century wine cellars. Continue to Tbilisi.

Overnight: Tbilisi

Day 10 (B, D)

Comprehensive city tour of Tbilisi, the charming and colourful capital of Georgia. After lunch in the renowned restaurant Littera (located in the iconic 'Writer's House'), spend the afternoon strolling through the city with visits to the Art Palace and the National Museum of History, which boasts a wonderful collection of golden artefacts from pre-Christian Georgia.

Overnight: Tbilisi

Day 11 (B)

Departure.

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- Explore the quirky centre of old town Tbilisi, Georgia's charming and colourful capital
- Enjoy serenity and wonderful frescoes at the monastery of Gelati
- Visit the impressive cave dwellings and monastery at 12th century Vardzia
- Take in the sights of Yerevan, one of the world's oldest inhabited cities
- View the breath-taking mountain backdrops including Svaneti in Georgia and Mt. Ararat in Armenia

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Flights from London Gatwick to Armenia and returning from Georgia
- 10 nights' accommodation in good standard hotels
- Daily breakfast, eight lunches and nine evening meals
- All excursions and entrance fees
- All overseas transport and English-speaking guides
- Services of a Prestige Holidays Tour Manager



“ I think that Yerevan, which is built from volcanic tuff and harmonic like a rose, is one of the most beautiful cities in the world. ”

Pablo Neruda

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01425 480600

www.toursprestigeholidays.co.uk | email: tours@prestigeholidays.co.uk

