

10 Days SILK ROAD ARMENIA GEORGIA-ARMENIA 2020



Day 1: Departure

Arrival in Tbilisi, meet at the airport and transfer to a hotel for rest.

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Day 2: Tbilisi

Take a walking tour of Old Tbilisi. *Today we won't use a vehicle and travel on foot and by tube.*

Tbilisi is a blend of Asian eeriness and European charm. Located in the gorge of Mtkvari River it's shaped out in accordance with the terrain and forms a very beautiful city with Mt. Mtatsminda embracing the entire town, Narikala Fortress topping up the oldest quarter of Tbilisi – Kala and Metekhi Church overlooking Mtkvari River from a rocky plateau.

In this classic tour of Tbilisi you'll see the highlights of the Old Town with beautiful Orthodox Christian Churches, Mosque, Synagogue, famous and refreshing Sulphur Baths, narrow cobbled streets with hanging wooden carved multi-colored balconies and the 19th century houses following the architectural styles of the 19th century Europe, Narikala Fortress, the glass Bridge of Peace, Freedom Square and Rustaveli Avenue. Here we'll start our tube ride to a local family.

We will have lunch at a local family where we also get acquainted with Georgian traditional dish – Khinkali making, as well as traditional cheese bread called -Khachapuri.

Overnight at a hotel in Tbilisi.

(B/L)

Day 3: Tbilisi/Sighnaghi/Nukriaani/Velistsikhe/Tbilisi

Today we explore the wine land of Georgia – Kakheti where we try national dishes, home-made wine, enjoy the great views and take part in baking Georgian bread Shoti.

Our first stop is fortified tiny town of love Sighnaghi. We take a walk in the cobbled street of this magnificent little town and enjoy the views of Alazani Valley topped by the Great Caucasus Mountains from the edge of its wall. *Later we continue to visit local female community where we will taste traditional dishes, learn how to make "Teka" (felt), master will demonstrate how Georgians make felt and artifacts out of it, here we also learn how to make Georgian traditional sweets Churchkhela.*

Continue our drive to local farmer's winery where we get acquainted with the traditional wine making methods & see Qvevri – Georgian wine keeping vessels buried underground. Qvevri wine is on UNESCO's Intangible Heritage List. We taste home-made wine, bake mouthwatering Georgian bread in Tone (clay oven). After the tour we return to Tbilisi.

(B/L)

Day 4: Tbilisi/Mtskheta/Gori/Uplistsikhe/Tbilisi

In the Morning drive to the Ancient capital and religious center of Georgia – Mtskheta with its historical sites: The Church of Jvari (6th century) and Svetitskhoveli Cathedral (11th century). Jvari and Svetitskhoveli are World Heritage Sites of UNESCO. *Continue our drive to village Tserovani to visit IDP settlement, where enamel art work became the life solution for many, here we learn the technique of enamel art, It is remarkable, that the art of Georgian cloisonne enamel has no less than 1200 years of existence. Enjoy lunch with locals here.*

Continue to Gori to visit society “Biliki”, which represents Child care program -to include children from vulnerable families of the Shida Kartli region and the care of the children.

Later we delve deep to Georgia’s ancient history by visiting the cave city Uplistsikhe which used to host the old caravans transporting goods from Asia to Europe as it was on the Great Silk Road route. After the tour return to Tbilisi.

Overnight at a hotel in Tbilisi.

(B/L)

Day 5: Tbilisi- Sadakhlo border- Dilijan - Transcaucasian Trail in Dilijan National Park- Goshavank-Yerevan

Breakfast. Drive to Armenian border Sadakhlo and change guide and driver. Continue the tour in Armenia. Today we will do a hiking tour which will start from Parz lake, which is very beautiful clear mountainous lake. This route is a part of Transcaucasian trail of hiking and trekking routes. Our paths pass through green forests and will take us to Goshavank monastery. Lunch at a local house in Dilijan with a family. Small stroll in Dilijan, the small Switzerland of Armenia, surrounded by mountains covered by dense forests. This is the best place to be near nature. Walking along the Shramberyan Street we will come across with many museums, souvenirs’ markets, small shops and so on. We will also



observe two traditional houses built of wood, with tiled roofs and balconies with meticulously carved being typical examples of Dilijan. Overnight in Dilijan.

(B,L)

Day 6: Dilijan – Sevan - Garni-Geghard- Yerevan

Breakfast. Start the tour driving to Lake Sevan which is one of the largest lakes in the world. It stands out with its sweet and astonishingly blue water. Here we can enjoy the breathtaking scenery of the beautiful lake. Then we will visit Sevanavank Monastery which is situated on Sevan Peninsula. There are 2 monasteries actually; one of them is destroyed but the other stands still. They have been built in the middle Ages, around 10th century. Take trip to Garni. This Pagan Temple was built in the 1st century AD. It is the only temple that has been preserves from the Pagan times in Armenia. It was devoted to the god Mihr, who was the god of cleanness. In 1679 it was destroyed by earthquake. In the 1975 the Temple was restored. Then we will continue our trip to Geghard Monastery. Its name came from the legendary lance that was used to pierce the body of Christ. It has been kept here for centuries. Though the exact foundation of the monastery is unknown, the present complex was built in the mid – 13th century. *Afterwards we will a local house where you will have the chance to see and participate in the preparation of Armenian national bread: lavash. It is a very thin, usually sold in very large forms. It is usually cooked in a ground oven: “tonir”. In 2015 it has been inscribed in UNESCO intangible heritage list. Here we will enjoy the “Armenian fast food” with lavash and cheese. Lunch with the family in the garden. Get back to Yerevan and overnight.*

(B,L)

Day 7: Yerevan /city tour

Breakfast. We will start the tour with the tour in the capital of Armenia: Yerevan. For ages this city has been known as a “pink city” because of the color of the stone it has been built with. So we will visit Republic square, Mashtoc Avenue, the House of Opera and Ballet after Aram Khachatryan, the park “Cascad”. Then we will visit the Manuscript Museum of Armenia, which is called Matenadaran; here all ancient Armenian Manuscripts are kept. **Visit Terracota Ceramic Studio for master class of clay art and craft. You are welcome to participate and leave your own masterpeice.** Visit local market of fruits and dry fruits and homemade sweets. Overnight in the hotel. (B)

Day 8:Yerevan- Arshaluis Village- Ejmiatsin – Zvartnoc- Parakar Village -Yerevan

Breakfast. Drive to Arshaluis Village in Armavir region. **Here we will visit famous Sculptor and Painter Rouben Nalbandyan, whose works of art are participating in world exhibitions. Here we will also see his small school where many children are studying. We will see the small exhibition of paintings of children. We will have coffee break with**



home made sweets treated by the hostess. We will start the excursion to centuries-old monuments Ejmiatsin and Zvartnots. These sites are listed on UNESCO World Heritage list. The Cathedral of Ejmiatsin, founded in 303, is the official residence of the Catholicos of Armenia. We’ll continue the trip to Zvartnots Temple, which was built on 7th century by Nerses Builder Catholicos. **Drive to Parakar village and at a local house we will have lunch and will enjoy the cooking master class of Armenian desserts “gata” and “Sudzukh”. The show will by run by a famous Armenian TV star. The active participants will get gifts by the host and will be treated by homemade lyquior.** Drive back to Yerevan.

(B,L)

Day 9:Yerevan –Khor Virap – Areni –Noravank – Yeghegnadzor- Yerevan

Breakfast. Take trip to Khor Virap Monastery (4-18th cc.). This monastery is very prominent because of its history; Gregory the Illuminator, who introduced Christianity to Armenia, has been imprisoned there about 13 years as at that time there was a prison in the place of the monastery. Here we can enjoy the spectacular view of the sacred Ararat Mountain - an immortal symbol of Armenia. **On our way towards Noravank we will visit village Areni which is considered to be an important center of wine production industry. You are welcome to taste its excellent wine.** We will continue our tour to Noravank - a monastery of XII century situated among amazing sheer rocks on the bench of a twisty gorge. This is the only monastery where we may find a unique sculpture of Father God. **Drive to Yeghegnadzor. We will visit here a local house where we will take part in the master class of vodka preparation. We will see how is homemade vodka prepared. We will also participate in preparation of Armenian cake “Gata”, make it with our hands and bake and taste it. We will have lucnh here and we will taste the very special meal of the hostess, Dolma with Onion.** Drive back to Yerevan and overnight there.

(B,L)

Day 10: Departure

Breakfast. Transfer to the airport.

PRICE IN USD PER PERSON IN ECH COUNTRY

GEORGIA

Hotels	2	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	S/S	FB
4* Vinotel	910	780	710	705	680	670	660	650	650	640	300	95

Tour price includes :

- Accomodation in hotels in DBL rooms;
- Professional English speaking guide;
- Transportation / 2-4 pax- Mini van, 5-12 pax- Mercedes Sprinter, 13 pax and more- Big bus /
- All entrance fees;
- *Water with reused plastic bottles****
- 5 breakfasts, 4 lunches

- Portage at the hotel

Tour price does not include:

- Travel insurance;
- Alcoholic beverages;
- Air Tickets;
- Visits outside the program;
- Other meals not mentioned in the program

ARMENIA

Hotels	2	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	S/S	FB
4*	950	710	660	610	580	560	580	560	550	560	160	140

Tour price includes :

- Accomodation in hotels in DBL rooms;
- Professional English speaking guide;
- Transportation / 2-4 pax- Mini van, 5-13 pax- Mercedes Sprinter, 14-18 -Mercedes Atego, 20 pax and more- Big bus /
- All entrance fees
- *Water with reused plastic bottles****
- Wine factory visit and degustation
- Master class of Sudzukh and Arishta
- Master class of “lavash”
- 5 breakfasts, 4 lunches

- Master class of Vodka and Gata
- Master class of Ceramics
- Master class of sculptor

Tour price does not include:

- Travel insurance;
- Alcoholic beverages;
- Air Tickets;
- Visits outside the program;
- Other meals not mentioned in the program

Notes:

Vernissage / Armenian handicraft market / is open only on Saturdays and Sundays

On Monday all museums are closed/ Matenadaran is also closed on Sundays /

Zvartnots monument is closed on Mondays

Ejmiatsin Cathedral is under restoration and the visit to Ejmiatsin will be comprised of the other churches and monasteries there

Tatev Monastery is closed on Mondays for prophylactics

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(SRA – 15/01/2020)