



Itinerary

20 Day Gems of the Caucasus – Azerbaijan, Georgia & Armenia

***IMPORTANT NOTE: Any extra nights, optional tours or other amendments, will not be visible on this itinerary.**

Day 1: Arrive Baku, Azerbaijan

Arrive at Baku Airport, where you'll be met by your driver and transferred to your hotel for check-in. Spend the rest of the day relaxing after your flight or head out for a gentle first look around the city at your own pace.

NOTE: The included transfer is a group transfer and will be scheduled according to the arrival times of the majority of guests. If you arrive earlier and prefer not to wait, or if your flight arrives after the scheduled group transfer, you may arrange a private transfer (additional charges apply) or make your own way to the hotel.

In the evening, you may like to take a stroll along Baku Boulevard (Seaside Promenade) or settle in for dinner nearby, enjoying your first taste of Azerbaijani hospitality.

APPROXIMATE DISTANCE: 25km

APPROXIMATE TRAVEL TIME: 30min

Day 2: Baku - City Tour

After breakfast at the hotel, begin your sightseeing with a visit to Memory Alley (Shehidler Khiyabany), a peaceful memorial park offering sweeping panoramic views over Baku and honouring the city's heroes.

Continue on a guided walking tour through central Baku, discovering its elegant 19th–20th century architecture and key historical landmarks. Visit the National History Museum of Azerbaijan to gain insight into the country's rich and diverse past.

After a lunch break at leisure, explore Baku's Old City (Icherisheher), a UNESCO World Heritage Site and the medieval heart of the city. Highlights include the Shirvanshahs' Palace, Mohammad's Mosque, traditional bathhouses, historic residential buildings, the lively Market Square, and the ancient caravanserais of Bukhara and Multani. See the iconic Maiden Tower (Giz Galasi), one of Baku's most recognisable landmarks.

Later, visit the striking Heydar Aliyev Center, a masterpiece of contemporary architecture, before returning to your hotel.

APPROXIMATE DISTANCE: 30km

APPROXIMATE TRAVEL TIME: 2 hrs

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT: Saphire Bayil, Baku

Day 3: Baku ~ Gobustan ~ Absheron Peninsula ~ Baku

After breakfast, depart Baku and travel approximately 70km to visit the fascinating Mud Volcanoes, one of Azerbaijan's most unusual natural attractions. Azerbaijan is home to nearly half of the world's mud volcanoes, creating a striking and otherworldly landscape.

Continue to the Gobustan Archaeological Reserve, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and open-air museum renowned for its collection of more than 4,000 ancient petroglyphs. These Neolithic rock carvings depict scenes of hunting, boating, rituals and ceremonial dances, providing valuable insight into the lives of early civilisations.

After lunch, journey to the Absheron Peninsula to witness Yanardag, the famous "Burning Mountain", where natural gas flames have burned continuously for centuries. Later, visit the Ateshgah Fire Temple, an 18th-century complex built by Hindu pilgrims and used as a fire-cult pilgrimage site until the late 19th century.

Return to Baku in the late afternoon and enjoy the evening at leisure.

APPROXIMATE DISTANCE: 140km

APPROXIMATE TRAVEL TIME: 4 hrs

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch

OVERNIGHT: Saphire Bayil, Baku

Day 4: Baku ~ Shamakhi ~ Sheki

After breakfast, depart Baku at approximately 8:30am and travel north-west towards Sheki. En route, stop in the historic town of Shamakhi to visit the Juma Mosque, one of the oldest mosques in the Caucasus region.

Continue the journey through dramatic landscapes, crossing a river canyon via the Muganly Mountain Pass and enjoying sweeping views of the Caucasus Mountains. Please note that due to ongoing road works, travel times may be longer than expected.

Arrive in Sheki in the afternoon and enjoy a city tour, including visits to the Sheki Fortress, the 18th-century Sheki Khan Palace, and the historic caravanserai. You will also have time to explore local artisans' workshops showcasing traditional Shebeke stained glass, silk and embroidery, pottery, confectionery and hat-making.

In the evening, check in to your hotel and enjoy the remainder of the day at leisure.

APPROXIMATE DISTANCE: 330km

APPROXIMATE TRAVEL TIME: 7 hrs

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT: Sheki Palace, Sheki

Day 5: Sheki ~ Lagodekhi, Georgia ~ Kvareli ~ Telavi

After breakfast at the hotel in Sheki, depart at approximately 8:00am for the Lagodekhi Border, continuing your journey into Georgia. The drive to the border is around 110km and takes approximately 2 hours, excluding time required for border formalities. Upon arrival, you will meet your Georgian guide at around 12:00pm (Azeri time).

NOTE: The border crossing involves a short walk of approximately 700 metres, including around 300 metres of stairs, as vehicles are not permitted in the neutral zone and luggage must be carried by hand.

After completing border formalities, continue to Kvareli, travelling approximately 45km. Visit the Khareba Winery, renowned for its wine tunnels carved deep into the Caucasus Mountains. The tunnels extend for 7.7km and maintain a constant temperature of 12–14°C year-round. Enjoy a wine tasting and take part in traditional Georgian masterclasses, including bread baking and Churchkhela making.

Later, visit Alaverdi Monastery, a significant religious site dating back to the 6th century, with the current cathedral built in the 11th century. Founded by the Assyrian monk Joseph Alaverdeli, it remained Georgia's tallest religious building until 2004.

Continue to Telavi in the heart of the Kakheti wine region and check in to your hotel.

APPROXIMATE DISTANCE: 200km

APPROXIMATE TRAVEL TIME: 5 hrs (excluding border formalities)

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT: Telavi Arge, Telavi

Day 6: Telavi ~ Ananuri ~ Gudauri

After breakfast at the hotel, begin the day with a visit to the Tsinandali Museum in Tsinandali village. Explore the 19th-century residence of Prince Alexander Chavchavadze, a prominent Kakheti nobleman, poet and public figure who established Georgia's first wine factory and transformed his estate into a cultural and intellectual centre. Stroll through the landscaped gardens, visit the historic winery and wine cellar, and enjoy a tasting of the estate's renowned Tsinandali wine.

Continue your journey north towards the Greater Caucasus Mountains to visit Ananuri Fortress, located approximately 95km from Telavi. This impressive 14th–17th century complex once served as the residence of the Aragvi Dukes and was strategically positioned to control key trade routes. Explore the fortress walls, bell tower and churches, including the Church of the Virgin and the Church of the Deity, showcasing a blend of architectural styles.

In the afternoon, drive onwards to the mountain resort town of Gudauri. En route, stop at the Gudauri Viewpoint, a striking cylindrical monument overlooking Devil's Valley and the surrounding Caucasus Mountains, offering spectacular panoramic views.

Arrive in Gudauri and check in to your hotel.

APPROXIMATE DISTANCE: 150km

APPROXIMATE TRAVEL TIME: 5 hrs

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT: Gudauri Inn, Gudauri

Day 7: Gudauri ~ Gergeti ~ Gveleti ~ Dariali Gorge ~ Gudauri

After breakfast at the hotel, enjoy a scenic drive to Stepantsminda, travelling approximately 32km. From here, ascend by 4WD to the iconic Gergeti Trinity Church, dramatically perched on the slopes of Mount Kazbegi. This 14th-century church is one of Georgia's most important religious and cultural landmarks. Weather permitting, take in breathtaking panoramic views of Mount Kazbegi (5,047m), linked to the legend of the Georgian hero Amirani.

Continue with a short 4WD transfer and hike to Gveleti Waterfall, located around 7km from Stepantsminda. The hike is approximately 1.8km return, with moderate ascents and descents through the impressive Dariali Gorge. Guests should be prepared for uneven terrain, rocky sections and potentially muddy paths.

Later, visit the Dariali Monastery Complex, nestled within the Greater Caucasus Mountains approximately 10km from Stepantsminda. Founded in 2005, the complex features the Church of the Archangels St Michael and St Gabriel and offers a peaceful spiritual setting surrounded by dramatic alpine scenery.

Before returning to Gudauri, enjoy a cultural visit to the Gallery-Studio "Mokheuri Teka" in Stepantsminda, where traditional Georgian felting is showcased. Browse handmade merino wool scarves, toys and souvenirs, or take part in an art felting workshop led by local artisans.

Return to Gudauri in the late afternoon and enjoy the evening at leisure.

APPROXIMATE DISTANCE: 80km

APPROXIMATE TRAVEL TIME: 4 hrs (including 4WD and hiking)

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT: Gudauri Inn, Gudauri

Day 8: Gudauri ~ Gori ~ Uplistsikhe ~ Kutaisi

After breakfast at the hotel in Gudauri, depart for a scenic drive south to Gori. On arrival, visit Stalin's House-Museum, established in 1937 and retaining many original Soviet-era features. The museum complex includes the house where Stalin was born, a memorial exhibition building, and his personal railway carriage used for historic journeys to Tehran, Yalta and Potsdam, providing insight into the life of the former Soviet leader.

Continue with a short drive to Uplistsikhe, an ancient cave town carved into sandstone on the banks of the Mtkvari River. First settled in the 2nd millennium BC, Uplistsikhe was once a key trading centre linking

Byzantium, India and China. Explore its rock-hewn streets, caves, pagan temples, palace remains, ancient theatre and other archaeological features.

In the afternoon, travel onwards to Kutaisi. This evening, enjoy dinner at Tina's Ethno Winehouse, located in the heart of the old town. Experience traditional Georgian hospitality in a family home setting, sampling homemade dishes and local wines, with vegetarian options available upon request.

After dinner, transfer to your hotel in Kutaisi.

APPROXIMATE DISTANCE: 320km

APPROXIMATE TRAVEL TIME: 6 hrs

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: Kutaisi Inn, Kutaisi

Day 9: Kutaisi ~ Martvili ~ Mestia

After breakfast, depart Kutaisi and travel to Martvili, a journey of approximately one hour. On arrival, visit the spectacular Martvili Canyon, one of Georgia's most impressive natural attractions. Carved over millions of years by the Abasha River, the canyon features dramatic limestone gorges, caves, waterfalls and crystal-clear waters.

Enjoy a boat trip along the upper section of the canyon, gliding beneath towering rock walls and reaching a picturesque 7-metre-high waterfall. There is time to enjoy the scenery, take photographs and, weather permitting, paddle or swim in the refreshing waters.

Later, continue with a scenic drive through the dramatic landscapes of Western Georgia to the mountain town of Mestia, located in the heart of the Svaneti region.

Arrive in Mestia and check in to your hotel.

APPROXIMATE DISTANCE: 220km

APPROXIMATE TRAVEL TIME: 6 hrs

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT: Mestia Paliani Hotel, Mestia

Day 10: Mestia ~ Ushguli ~ Mestia

After breakfast at the hotel in Mestia, set off on a scenic 4WD journey to Ushguli, travelling approximately 47km along rugged mountain tracks. Located in the upper Enguri Valley beneath the snow-capped massif of Mount Shkhara (5,193m), Georgia's highest peak, Ushguli is one of Europe's highest permanently inhabited settlements.

Explore this atmospheric village, renowned for its collection of more than 40 ancient Svan towers and recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1996. Despite increasing tourism, Ushguli has preserved its traditional way of life and distinctive cultural heritage, offering a fascinating insight into

Georgia's remote highland communities.

After time to explore, return to Mestia via the same 4WD route in the afternoon and enjoy the remainder of the day at leisure.

APPROXIMATE DISTANCE: 100km

APPROXIMATE TRAVEL TIME: 4 hrs (4WD)

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT: Mestia Paliani Hotel, Mestia

Day 11: Mestia ~ Enguri ~ Kutaisi

After breakfast at the hotel in Mestia, depart for a scenic drive to the Enguri Dam, travelling approximately 103km. Standing at 271.5 metres, Enguri Dam is the world's second-largest arch dam and an impressive feat of engineering. Stop at the viewpoint to admire the structure and enjoy panoramic views of the surrounding mountain landscape.

Continue to the ethnographic village of Sisa Tura in Chkhoria, near Zugdidi. Here, enjoy lunch and a hands-on cultural experience that showcases the history and traditions of the Samegrelo region. Explore the open-air displays of traditional household items and facilities, take part in activities such as preparing local dishes and grinding maize, and enjoy the peaceful setting around the village's artificial lake. Vegetarian options are available upon request.

In the afternoon, travel onwards to Kutaisi, arriving in the evening and checking in to your hotel.

APPROXIMATE DISTANCE: 285km

APPROXIMATE TRAVEL TIME: 6 hrs

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch

OVERNIGHT: Kutaisi Inn, Kutaisi

Day 12: Kutaisi ~ Tskaltubo ~ Tbilisi

After breakfast at the hotel in Kutaisi, enjoy a short drive to Tskaltubo to visit the impressive Prometheus Karst Caves. One of Georgia's largest and most spectacular cave systems, the caves feature an extraordinary array of stalactites, stalagmites, petrified waterfalls, cave pearls, underground rivers and lakes. The network of six interconnected caves offers a fascinating subterranean experience.

Continue to Otia's Ezo in Tskaltubo, the former home of renowned Georgian writer Otia Ioseliani. The estate, now run by his family, includes a cellar producing craft beer and Georgian wine. Enjoy tastings of locally brewed beers such as Blanche, APA and Stout, and browse a selection of authentic Georgian products including honey, cornflour, chacha and locally bottled beverages.

Continue to the nearby Jvari Monastery, another UNESCO-listed site dramatically positioned above the confluence of the Mtkvari and Aragvi rivers. Built between 585–604 AD, Jvari is an active place of worship and an important pilgrimage site, admired for its harmonious setting and carved stone reliefs.

In the late afternoon, drive to Tbilisi and check in to your hotel.

APPROXIMATE DISTANCE: 260km

APPROXIMATE TRAVEL TIME: 5 hrs

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT: Tbilisi Golden Tulip, Tbilisi

Day 13: Tbilisi - City Tour

After breakfast at the hotel, set out on a comprehensive city tour of Tbilisi, combining both driving and walking to explore the capital's most important historical and cultural landmarks.

Begin with a visit to the Holy Trinity Sameba Cathedral, the largest Georgian Orthodox cathedral and one of the largest in the South Caucasus. Built between 1995 and 2004, it stands as a powerful symbol of Georgia's national and spiritual revival. Continue to the 13th-century Metekhi Church, a key monument of old Tbilisi, before viewing the historic Narikala Fortress from the outside. This 4th-century fortification has long dominated the Old Town and is currently under renovation, with reopening planned for August 2025.

Discover more of Tbilisi's character with visits to the Old Sulfur Bathhouses, famous for their naturally warm mineral waters, as well as the lively Meidan Square and Shardeni Street, lined with cafés, restaurants, souvenir shops and art galleries. Cross the modern Bridge of Peace, a striking glass pedestrian bridge linking the old and new parts of the city.

The tour also includes a visit to the Anchiskhati Basilica, Tbilisi's oldest surviving church, dating back to the 6th century and reflecting the early adoption of Christianity in Georgia.

In the evening, enjoy a traditional folk show dinner at a local Tbilisi restaurant, featuring Georgian cuisine and cultural entertainment. Vegetarian options are available upon request.

APPROXIMATE DISTANCE: 20km

APPROXIMATE TRAVEL TIME: 4 hrs (city touring)

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: Tbilisi Golden Tulip, Tbilisi

Day 14: Tbilisi ~ Sadakhlo ~ Haghpat, Armenia ~ Haghartsin ~ Dilijan

After breakfast, depart Tbilisi and travel to the Sadakhlo border. After completing border formalities, enter Armenia and continue through the scenic Lori Region, known for its dramatic gorges, forested mountains and rich medieval heritage.

Your first stop is the UNESCO-listed Haghpat Monastery Complex, dating from the 10th–13th centuries and considered one of the finest examples of medieval Armenian architecture. Explore its basilica-style churches, refectory, bell tower and intricately carved khachkars (cross-stones). During the Middle Ages, Haghpat was an important religious and educational centre.

Continue to the Tavush Region to visit Haghartsin Monastery, a beautifully preserved complex nestled within the forests of Dilijan National Park. Dating back to the 10th–13th centuries, the monastery is renowned for its harmonious architecture, Surb Astvatsatsin Church and peaceful natural setting.

After sightseeing, drive to the resort town of Dilijan, often referred to as the “Armenian Switzerland” for its alpine scenery, fresh mountain air and spa-like atmosphere.

APPROXIMATE DISTANCE: 230km

APPROXIMATE TRAVEL TIME: 6 hrs (excluding border formalities)

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT: Dili Town, Dilijan

Day 15: Dilijan ~ Lake Sevan ~ Noratus ~ Selim Pass ~ Goris

After breakfast, depart Dilijan and travel to Lake Sevan, one of the world's largest high-altitude freshwater lakes, located at approximately 1,900 metres above sea level. Often referred to as the “Pearl of Armenia”, the lake is surrounded by mountains and offers striking alpine scenery.

Visit Sevanavank Monastery on the Sevan Peninsula, dating back to the 9th century. Climb the hill to enjoy panoramic views over the lake and explore the Surb Arakelots and Surb Astvatsatsin churches.

Continue to the medieval cemetery of Noratus, the largest khachkar (cross-stone) cemetery in the world, featuring more than 800 intricately carved stones depicting religious symbols and scenes from everyday life.

Later, visit Mikayelyans Farm for an authentic rural experience, where you can observe traditional cheese-making techniques and, if desired, sample local dairy products.

Travel onwards through the scenic Selim Pass, reaching an altitude of approximately 2,410 metres. Stop at the 14th-century Selim Caravanserai, a historic stone-built inn that once sheltered merchants and travellers along the ancient Silk Road.

Arrive in Goris in the late afternoon. This charming town is known for its traditional stone houses and dramatic surrounding rock formations.

APPROXIMATE DISTANCE: 260km

APPROXIMATE TRAVEL TIME: 7 hrs

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT: Red Roof Goris, Goris

Day 16: Goris ~ Khndzoresk ~ Tatev ~ Zorats Karer ~ Jermuk

After breakfast, depart Goris and travel to the Old Khndzoresk Cave Village, an abandoned settlement renowned for its cave dwellings carved into soft volcanic rock. Walk across the Khndzoresk Suspension Bridge, offering spectacular views over the surrounding gorge.

Continue to Tatev Monastery, one of Armenia's most iconic spiritual and architectural landmarks, dating from the 9th–13th centuries. Dramatically positioned on a cliff edge overlooking the Vorotan Gorge, the monastery complex includes Surb Poghos-Petros Church, Surb Grigor Tatevatsi Church and medieval university buildings. An optional ride on the Wings of Tatev Cable Car, the world's longest reversible aerial tramway, is available for those wishing to experience breathtaking views of the gorge below.

Later, visit Zorats Karer, also known as Karahunj or the "Armenian Stonehenge". This ancient archaeological and astronomical site consists of hundreds of standing stones and is believed to date back more than 7,000 years.

Continue to the spa town of Jermuk, famed for its mineral water springs, waterfalls and alpine scenery.

APPROXIMATE DISTANCE: 160km

APPROXIMATE TRAVEL TIME: 7 hrs

MEALS: Breakfast

OVERNIGHT: Grand Resort Jermuk, Jermuk

Day 17: Jermuk ~ Areni ~ Noravank ~ Khor Virap ~ Yerevan

After breakfast in Jermuk, depart the spa town and travel through the scenic Arpa River Valley, surrounded by dramatic mountains and deep gorges.

Your first stop is the Old Bridge Winery, a boutique winery located near Jermuk. Learn about Armenian winemaking traditions and indigenous grape varieties such as Areni Noir, Voskehat and Kangun. Enjoy a guided tour of the winery and a wine tasting, offering an introduction to the region's viticulture.

Continue to Areni Village, widely regarded as the cradle of Armenian wine and famous for the discovery of the Areni-1 Cave, where the world's oldest known winery, dating back more than 6,000 years, was uncovered. There may be time for an optional visit to a local winery or village for additional tastings.

Travel through the striking Noravank Canyon, known for its dramatic red rock cliffs, to reach Noravank Monastery. This beautiful 13th–14th century complex features Surb Karapet Church and the unique two-storey Surb Astvatsatsin (Mother of God) Church, distinguished by its external stone staircase.

Later, visit Khor Virap Monastery, one of Armenia's most important pilgrimage sites, located near the Turkish border. Descend into the underground dungeon where Saint Gregory the Illuminator was imprisoned and enjoy panoramic views of Mount Ararat, the biblical symbol of Armenia.

In the evening, continue to Yerevan. Enjoy a dinner with a traditional folk show before checking in to your hotel.

APPROXIMATE DISTANCE: 195km

APPROXIMATE TRAVEL TIME: 5 hrs

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: Ani Plaza, Yerevan

Day 18: Yerevan - City Tour

After breakfast, begin a guided city tour of Yerevan, the capital of Armenia and one of the world's oldest continuously inhabited cities.

Start at Republic Square, the architectural heart of the city, surrounded by government buildings, the National Gallery and the History Museum of Armenia. Continue to the Cascade Complex, a monumental stairway adorned with modern sculptures and art installations, offering panoramic views across the city and towards Mount Ararat (weather permitting).

Drive past the Opera House, Northern Avenue and other central streets to gain an overview of Yerevan's Soviet-era and modern architecture, with an optional stop at the Mother Armenia Monument viewpoint in Victory Park.

After the city tour, travel to Etchmiadzin (Vagharshapat), the spiritual and administrative centre of the Armenian Apostolic Church. Visit Etchmiadzin Cathedral, the world's first officially established Christian cathedral, founded in 301 AD and listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Explore the cathedral complex, including its chapels and the Patriarchal residence, with an optional visit to the Etchmiadzin Treasury Museum housing sacred relics and religious artefacts.

Enjoy a traditional Armenian culinary experience with a Dolma and Sujukh masterclass, followed by lunch. Learn the preparation of these iconic dishes before tasting freshly prepared local specialities.

Continue to the ruins of Zvartnots Cathedral, a 7th-century architectural masterpiece and UNESCO World Heritage Site, renowned for its unique circular design and scenic setting with views of Mount Ararat.

In the afternoon, return to Yerevan and enjoy the remainder of the day at leisure.

APPROXIMATE DISTANCE: 80km

APPROXIMATE TRAVEL TIME: 4 hrs

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch

OVERNIGHT: Ani Plaza, Yerevan

Day 19: Yerevan ~ Garni ~ Geghard ~ Yerevan

After breakfast in Yerevan, depart for an excursion to the Garni Gorge, one of Armenia's most scenic regions.

Visit the Garni Pagan Temple, a 1st-century Greco-Roman colonnaded temple dedicated to the Sun God Mithra and the only preserved pagan temple in the Caucasus. Explore the archaeological complex, including the remains of the royal palace and Roman bathhouse with mosaic floors, and enjoy panoramic views over the Azat River Gorge and the striking basalt formations known as the Symphony of Stones.

Continue to a nearby village for a traditional lavash baking demonstration, where you will observe the preparation of Armenia's famous flatbread in a traditional tonir (clay oven). Enjoy a home-style Armenian lunch featuring local dishes.

After lunch, travel to Geghard Monastery, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of Armenia's most sacred places. Partly carved into the rock, the monastery is renowned for its cave churches, sacred springs and remarkable acoustics.

In the afternoon, return to Yerevan. The remainder of the day is at leisure for shopping, visiting cafés or exploring local markets such as the Vernissage.

APPROXIMATE DISTANCE: 100km

APPROXIMATE TRAVEL TIME: 4 hrs

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch

OVERNIGHT: Ani Plaza, Yerevan

Day 20: Depart Yerevan

After breakfast, transfer to Zvartnots International Airport for your onward flight.

NOTE: The included transfer in Yerevan is a group departure transfer and will be scheduled according to the departure times of the majority of guests. If your flight departs earlier and you prefer not to wait, or if your flight departs after the scheduled group transfer, you may arrange a private transfer (additional charges apply) or make your own way to the airport.

APPROXIMATE DISTANCE: 15km

APPROXIMATE TRAVEL TIME: 30min

MEALS: Breakfast