

Best of Azerbaijan - 8 days

AZ-02



This eight day tour offers the chance to comprehensively explore the fascinating country of Azerbaijan. Beginning in the nation's capital, Baku, you'll visit historically important Shamakhi and the ancient Silk Road city of Sheki, see the curious natural phenomenon that is Yanar Dag and see the 16th century Ramana Fortress.

DEPARTURE DATES: 05.06.2022; 12.06.2022; 19.06.2022; 26.06.2022; 03.07.2022; 10.07.2022; 17.07.2022; 24.07.2022; 31.07.2022; 07.08.2022; 14.08.2022; 21.08.2022; 28.08.2022; 04.09.2022; 11.09.2022; 18.09.2022; 25.09.2022; 02.10.2022; 09.10.2022; 16.10.2022; 23.10.2022; 30.10.2022; 06.11.2022; 13.11.2022; 20.11.2022.

ITINERARY

Day 1 - Baku

On arrival at Baku's international airport you'll be met by our representative for your transfer to the hotel. After check in there'll be free time. Overnight in Baku. (D)

Day 2 - Baku - Shamakhi - Kish - Sheki

Azerbaijan has a long history, as demonstrated by places such as Shamakhi. It was once the capital of the Shirvan Empire and the base of the Shirvan Dynasty. These days Shamakhi is famous for its winemaking. Visiting this city you'll have an opportunity to acquaint yourself with the Yeddi Gumbez mausoleum, whose imposing domes rise mysteriously above an almost silent valley. From here there are stunning views back to Shamakhi. Not far away, you'll encounter the tombs of Diri Baba. Equally atmospheric, the structures are built into the rock giving the appearance of an eagle's nest. As we approach, only the front is visible; the other sides are disguised by the cliffs from which they were hewn, giving the impression that the tomb is suspended off the ground. The monument has two storeys: while the lower floor was probably for servants, the upper, reached by stairs, would have been the salon. Whether it is a sacred site or a place of burial is up for interpretation. Continuing towards Sheki, we stop at Kish. This village is the site of a centuries-old Albanian church which was incorporated into the Armenian Apostolic Church back in 1836. Near the church you'll find an ancient cemetery where, visible through a glass cupola, you'll see numerous human remains. These bodies are impressively tall, appearing to be 2.5 metres or more. The Albanians who once resided here were giants with white skin and golden hair, very unlike the inhabitants of the modern Caucasian nations. Overnight in Sheki. (B, D)

Day 3 - Sheki - Baku

An excursion to the oldest city in Azerbaijan is a real treat. In ancient times people sold silk here, making Sheki famous among merchants travelling the Great Silk Road. Present day Sheki is packed with sights including a good history museum. The jewel in Sheki's crown, however, is Khan's Summer Palace with its wonderful façades built from brick, river stones and oak, decorated with floral motives. Inside, the palace impresses even more. Within its six rooms, there are beautiful frescoes painted by talented craftsman; some of them feature flowers, while others depict hunting or battle scenes. In addition, two beautiful mirrored balconies, ornate decoration using rare coloured Venetian glass and exquisite paintings featuring colourful depictions of birds and animals ensure this place does not disappoint the tourist. The first floor of this palace offers clues to Khan's wealth and power as the murals on the walls of animals and hunting are usually thought of as symbols of nobility. In ancient times the palace was surrounded by beautiful gardens, though nowadays only two large trees survive. Later, you'll be driven to Baku where you'll check into the hotel for an overnight stay. Overnight in Baku. (B, D)

Day 4 - Baku

Today, we begin our discovery of the city of Baku, enjoying a sightseeing tour of Baku's most absorbing sights. We'll visit to the city's main monumental, historical and architectural attractions before climbing to the city's highest point at Upland Park for an impressive panorama of the Azeri capital and its bay. From there we'll descend to the old city, known locally as Icheri sheher. This was all there was of Baku until the mid-19th century when, as a result of the oil boom, a growth spurt caused the city to spill beyond its defensive walls. This tiny area measures just 22 square hectares and yet it contains so many significant sights, including the Shirvanshahs

Palace, the Maiden Tower and the Karavansaray, once the place of merchants' rest. Today, just 1300 families call Icheri sheher, this city within a city, home. It's a delightful place to take an evening stroll through the maze of streets to the gathering place of Fountains Square. There are also plenty of opportunities for shopping, should you wish. Overnight in Baku. (B, D)

Day 5 - Baku - Gobustan - Yanar Dag - Baku

Today after breakfast our guide will be waiting to collect you for your included excursion to Gobustan National Park. Situated in East Azerbaijan, this archaeological reserve borders the southern slopes of the Major Caucasus ridge to the north, the Harami and Mishov Mountains to the south, Pirsaat River to the west and the Caspian Sea and Absheron peninsula to the east. Gobustan is a culturally significant landscape of myriad rock carvings. Over 6000 petroglyphs have been discovered here together; that's not all - there are also many ancient caves and archaeological sites within the reserve. Incredibly, some have been dated to as early as the 18th century BC. Together, they offer a fascinating insight into the development of human activity in this area, with scenes of mountain goat hunts, ceremonial dances and even maritime imagery as this place used to be by the sea. On our way back to Baku, you'll stop at Yanar Dag. This intriguing natural phenomenon is called the Burning Rock, so named because it is fuelled by seepage of natural gas. Flames up to three metres high regularly shoot from the sandstone hillside. Many believe that Yanar Dag is the reason Azerbaijan acquired its nickname, the Land of Fire. Overnight in Baku. (B, D)

Day 6 - Baku - Ateshgah - Ramana Castle - Baku

Today's excursion is a guided tour to Ateshgah. The temple of fire worshippers, Ateshgah is located on the Apsheron peninsula on the outskirts of Surakhani village just thirty kilometres from the center of Baku. It was revered in different times by Zoroastrians, Hindus and Sikhs. The current temple building dates from the 17th century, but far more ancient artefacts have been excavated here. This pentagonal complex has an open courtyard with an altar in the centre which was a place of pilgrimage for worshippers. This open air museum has been recently restored and by the decree of the President of Azerbaijan, Ateshgah was declared a State historical-architectural reserve. Our final stop today will be an excursion to the fortress of Ramana. Ramana Castle is estimated to date back several centuries. The height of the fortress' main tower is an imposing fifteen metres and is built of stone. It is assumed that it was built to protect a palace and was used during the reign of Shirvanshahs. Overnight in Baku. (B, D)

Day 7 - Baku

Having returned to Baku, we will visit some of the sights associated with modern Baku: the waterfront area of Baku Boulevard behind which rise the famous Flame Towers skyscrapers, the carpet museum, Heydar Aliyev Cultural Centre, Shopping Mall 28th May and Park Boulevard, a mall situated on the main promenade. Overnight in Baku. (B, D)

Day 8 - Baku

After breakfast, you'll transfer to the airport for your flight home. (B)

TOUR INCLUSIONS AND OPTIONAL EXTRAS

Included

[International flights](#)
[Accommodation](#)
[Guided tours & cultural programme](#)
English - speaking guides
[Half board meals](#)
[Ground transportation](#)
[Airport transfers](#)
[Azerbaijan e-visa](#)

Not included

[Personal travel insurance](#)
[Optional excursions](#)

Practical information

[About Best of Caucasus company](#)
[Book with confidence - covid FAQs](#)
[Contact our travel consultants](#)

AVAILABLE PACKAGES

COMFORT - 3* PACKAGE

Dates	Excl. flights	Incl. flights*	Single suppl.
05/06/2022 - 12/06/2022	£1245	£1645	£145
12/06/2022 - 19/06/2022	£1245	£1645	£145
19/06/2022 - 26/06/2022	£1245	£1645	£145
26/06/2022 - 03/07/2022	£1245	£1645	£145

03/07/2022 - 10/07/2022	£1245	£1645	£145
10/07/2022 - 17/07/2022	£1245	£1645	£145
17/07/2022 - 24/07/2022	£1245	£1645	£145
24/07/2022 - 31/07/2022	£1245	£1645	£145
31/07/2022 - 07/08/2022	£1245	£1645	£145
07/08/2022 - 14/08/2022	£1245	£1645	£145
14/08/2022 - 21/08/2022	£1245	£1645	£145
21/08/2022 - 28/08/2022	£1245	£1645	£145
28/08/2022 - 04/09/2022	£1245	£1645	£145
04/09/2022 - 11/09/2022	£1245	£1645	£145
11/09/2022 - 18/09/2022	£1245	£1645	£145
18/09/2022 - 25/09/2022	£1245	£1645	£145
25/09/2022 - 02/10/2022	£1245	£1645	£145
02/10/2022 - 09/10/2022	£1245	£1645	£145
09/10/2022 - 16/10/2022	£1245	£1645	£145
16/10/2022 - 23/10/2022	£1245	£1645	£145
23/10/2022 - 30/10/2022	£1245	£1645	£145
30/10/2022 - 06/11/2022	£1245	£1645	£145
06/11/2022 - 13/11/2022	£1245	£1645	£145
13/11/2022 - 20/11/2022	£1245	£1645	£145
20/11/2022 - 27/11/2022	£1245	£1645	£145

PREMIUM - 4* PACKAGE

Dates	Excl. flights	Incl. flights*	Single suppl.
05/06/2022 - 12/06/2022	£1345	£1745	£195
12/06/2022 - 19/06/2022	£1345	£1745	£195
19/06/2022 - 26/06/2022	£1345	£1745	£195
26/06/2022 - 03/07/2022	£1345	£1745	£195
03/07/2022 - 10/07/2022	£1345	£1745	£195
10/07/2022 - 17/07/2022	£1345	£1745	£195
17/07/2022 - 24/07/2022	£1345	£1745	£195
24/07/2022 - 31/07/2022	£1345	£1745	£195
31/07/2022 - 07/08/2022	£1345	£1745	£195
07/08/2022 - 14/08/2022	£1345	£1745	£195
14/08/2022 - 21/08/2022	£1345	£1745	£195
21/08/2022 - 28/08/2022	£1345	£1745	£195
28/08/2022 - 04/09/2022	£1345	£1745	£195
04/09/2022 - 11/09/2022	£1345	£1745	£195
11/09/2022 - 18/09/2022	£1345	£1745	£195
18/09/2022 - 25/09/2022	£1345	£1745	£195
25/09/2022 - 02/10/2022	£1345	£1745	£195
02/10/2022 - 09/10/2022	£1345	£1745	£195
09/10/2022 - 16/10/2022	£1345	£1745	£195
16/10/2022 - 23/10/2022	£1345	£1745	£195
23/10/2022 - 30/10/2022	£1345	£1745	£195
30/10/2022 - 06/11/2022	£1345	£1745	£195
06/11/2022 - 13/11/2022	£1345	£1745	£195
13/11/2022 - 20/11/2022	£1345	£1745	£195
20/11/2022 - 27/11/2022	£1345	£1745	£195

ALTERNATIVE TOURS AND TAILOR-MADE ARRANGEMENTS

In addition to organized group tours, we also offer individual trips. This could be an entirely separate holiday arrangement or an extension to a regular "Best of Caucasus" trip. Whether you would like to travel independently, or just with the group of your friends or colleagues, we can help to realise your holiday plans. Depending on your preference for either comfort or budget, we can help you to design the ideal itinerary and provide the optimal value-for-money quote. Please [contact us for a quote](#).

Based on your chosen tour we believe you might be interested in alternative trips listed below:

- > [Best of Armenia - 8 days \(AM-02\)](#), Price from £1,295, 8 days
- > [Highlights of Azerbaijan - 6 days \(AZ-01\)](#), Price from £945, 6 days

- > [Great Georgian Discovery - 11 days \(GE-03\)](#), Price from £1,695, 11 days
- > [Short Break in Istanbul with a Visit to Cappadocia - 6 days \(TR-02\)](#), Price from £945, 6 days

HOW TO BOOK

Step 1 - Choose Your Holiday & Departure Dates

It is important that you choose a trip that is well suited to your interests, capabilities and experience. All our staff has first hand experience of a range of Best of Caucasus holidays and will be happy to talk to you about your chosen trip, enabling you to assess its suitability. We also recommend that you read the descriptions of the relevant region, general information about our services, booking conditions, and trip dossiers carefully. Once you know what tour is right for you, as well as your departure dates, you can start your booking.

Step 2 - Complete the Booking Form

Online: log on to www.best-of-caucasus.co.uk and open the tour you wish to book and click "Book now". To provide you with a more personalised and relevant experience in all your contact with Best of Caucasus, when you book online we ask you to register on our system. Once registered you can retrieve your bookings, update newsletter subscriptions, passenger and emergency contact details, submit special dietary requests, view invoices and receipts, download trip documents.

Email: alternatively, you can book your tour per email - info@best-of-caucasus.co.uk, or

Phone: call us on **+44 (0)20 30 51 76 40**

When booking by email or over the phone please confirm your personal details (full name and address), chosen tour, departure date, package type (hotel category), and available upgrades.

Step 3 - Confirmation of your booking

On receipt of your booking form, we will make any necessary reservations for you and send you confirmation invoice, including the flight details, and additional information about your destination: advice on visas, vaccinations and what to take. The invoice will also show you the exact due date of the payment.

Step 4 - Payment

Please note, if your departure date is more than 56 days you will need to pay the deposit, which should cover the full cost of the flight (if applicable), plus 10% of the land-only arrangements (minimum £100) per person towards your tour. The outstanding payment must be made 56 days prior to departure. If you book less than 56 days before departure, full payment must be made at the time of your booking. You can make your payment by bank transfer, debit or credit card, cheque, bankers draft or postal order. You will find all relevant payment details in your invoice.

