

Great Georgian Discovery with Trekking Extension - 13 days

GE-11



This 13 day tour is a comprehensive option aimed at travellers who are able to devote more time. The varied programme covers sights across the country. Highlights include visits to the charming capital Tbilisi, the opportunity to admire UNESCO-listed monasteries and churches and the chance to learn more about Joseph Stalin in his birthplace, Gori. Georgia's natural beauty isn't overlooked as you tour the wine growing region of Kakheti and the mountains and gorges of breathtaking Kazbegi, as well as visits to sprawling subterranean caves and ancient rock hewn dwellings. By the end of the tour you'll have a good grasp of what makes Georgia tick and will have enjoyed the warmest of welcomes from those who live there.

DEPARTURE DATES: 25.05.2024; 01.06.2024; 08.06.2024; 15.06.2024; 22.06.2024; 29.06.2024; 06.07.2024; 13.07.2024; 20.07.2024; 27.07.2024; 03.08.2024; 10.08.2024; 17.08.2024; 24.08.2024; 31.08.2024.

ITINERARY

Day 1 - Tbilisi

Georgia awaits as you approach its capital Tbilisi by air. Our representative will be waiting for you in the arrivals hall, ready for your adventure to begin. An included transfer will take the stress out of the journey to your city centre hotel. You'll have time to settle in and perhaps explore a little of your surroundings. Overnight Tbilisi.

Day 2 - Tbilisi

Few European capitals are as charming as Tbilisi, with its magnificent wooden buildings, thermal baths and historic churches. Today, we'll help you understand a little of the city's history and what makes its residents tick. We think the best place to start is at the Metekhi church. It has stood beside the River Mtkvari since the 13th century. Beside this historic structure is a statue of Tbilisi's founder, King Vakhtang Gorgasali. Look up and you'll see the imposing 4th century Narikala Fortress; we'll head up there for a selfie with Mother Georgia, a huge statue on the cliff top. Also on today's itinerary are Antchiskhati Church, Sioni Cathedral, Tbilisi's synagogue, the Georgian National Museum and the capital's busiest shopping street, Rustaveli Avenue. Breakfast, dinner and overnight Tbilisi.

Day 3 - Tbilisi - Mtskheta - Kutaisi

Once, Mtskheta was the capital of Georgia and that storied past is evident in its historical legacy, not least in its UNESCO World Heritage Sites. We'll show you around the 6th century Djvari church and also the 11th century Svetitskhoveli cathedral which are both worthy of their places on this prestigious list. Afterwards, we'll drive to Kutaisi, Georgia's second city. Just outside lies the impressive Prometheus Cave, which is crammed with stalactites and stalagmites. Tonight, your hotel is in the nearby spa resort of Tskaltubo. Breakfast, dinner and overnight Tskaltubo.

Day 4 - Kutaisi - Gelati - Bagrati - Akhaltsikhe

This morning we'll set out after breakfast to visit one of Georgia's farmers' markets. Agriculture still plays an important role in the country and it's fun to watch the locals interact with traders. Once we've absorbed the sights, smells and sounds - and perhaps bought a snack or two - we'll continue on to the Gelati monastery complex, founded by King David IV in 1106 and another of Georgia's compelling UNESCO World Heritage Sites. There too, we'll find Bagrati Cathedral, a magnet for pilgrims. There'll be time to fit in a visit to the Academy complex, which dates from the 12th century, before driving over to Akhaltsikhe where we plan to stay overnight. Breakfast, dinner and overnight Akhaltsikhe.

Day 5 - Akhaltsikhe - Vardzia - Rabati Fortress - Akhaltsikhe

As we board the minibus this morning, we're in for a real treat - the road to Vardzia is one of the most dramatic and spectacular in the country. Our driver will skillfully navigate the steep-sided canyon of the upper Mtkvari River leaving us free to concentrate on the extraordinary scenery that we see out of the window. Vardzia too won't disappoint. This impressive complex boasts somewhere in the region of 300 caves, hewn from the rock in ancient times. Each of these painstakingly carved spaces had its own distinct purpose: wine cellars, refectories, churches and so on. Last up today is a visit to Rabati Fortress where we'll tour the Ethnographic

Museum. Breakfast, dinner and overnight Akhaltsikhe.

Day 6 - Akhaltsikhe - Borjomi - Gori - Tbilisi

Today, we'll retrace our steps to Tbilisi, and our first stop is in the spa town of Borjomi. It has a pretty park, so we'll stretch our legs and take a break from the road in leafy surroundings. Afterwards we'll continue on to Gori. It may surprise you to learn that this is the birthplace of Joseph Stalin, the infamous 20th century leader of the Soviet Union. In the town's museum, learn about his formative years following his birth in 1878. You can see the wooden hut in which he was born and the railway carriage he worked in when he grew important enough to have his own train. Before we head back to Tbilisi, we will tour another cave city, this time Uplistikhe. Back in the capital, before we turn in for the night, we'll dine in a traditional restaurant and enjoy a folk dancing or singing performance. Breakfast, dinner and overnight Tbilisi.

Day 7 - Tbilisi - Gombori - Alaverdi - Napareuli - Alaverdi - Gremi - Signagi

Today's excursion unlocks the secrets of Georgia's longstanding tradition of winemaking, which dates back around 7000 years. The most productive region for this is Kakheti and that's where we're heading. First though, we'd like to show you around Gremi Fortress and Alaverdi Monastery. Once we've admired these two historic places, we'll drop you off in Napareuli for a wine tasting. Arguably we've saved the best for last as we visit Signagi this afternoon. This gorgeous town is partially enclosed by stone walls linking fortified towers; the views from the walls over the surrounding countryside are remarkable. Rather than rush off, we've opted to stay overnight, so you can explore a little more as you walk off dinner. Breakfast, dinner and overnight Signagi.

Day 8 - Signagi - Bodbe - Tbilisi

We don't need to travel far for this morning's excursion as Bodbe Monastery is right on Signagi's doorstep. This complex is dedicated to St Nino and is a delightful place to walk around, with a beautiful church and swathes of flowerbeds in its well-tended grounds. It will be a wrench to leave such a pretty place but we're bound for Tbilisi once more. Breakfast, dinner and overnight Tbilisi.

Day 9 - Tbilisi - Ananuri - Gudauri - Kazbegi

This morning we set off north along the Georgian Military Highway. Our first stop is at Ananuri, a castle complex at the head of a reservoir, where we'll explore crenellations and castle rooms. We'll hit the road again, bound for Gudauri. This is one of Georgia's top ski resorts in winter and in summer, the sight of the surrounding mountain landscape is worth a stop. But the main draw lies further into the snowcapped mountains of the Great Caucasus. At Kazbegi, also known as Stepantsminda, we'll swap our wheels for 4x4 jeeps that will carry us up a bumpy track to Gergeti Trinity Church. This church dates from the 14th century and sits in glorious isolation at 2170 metres above sea level. The views from up there are simply magical. Eventually, we'll come back down to Kazbegi where our overnight hotel awaits. Breakfast, dinner and overnight Kazbegi.

Day 10 - Kazbegi

It's back in the jeeps this morning to tackle the Sno Valley. Our destination will be the mountain village of Jutta, which sits at an altitude of 2165 metres above sea level. Traditions persist here, and the way of life has changed little over the centuries. This is the starting point for our hike to Mount Chaukhebi, a 3842 metre peak that's as beautiful as any in the Great Caucasus. We'll be on our feet for about 5 hours, ascending and then descending around 500 metres, but in scenery this wonderful we reckon you'll hardly notice your aching calf muscles. Breakfast, dinner and overnight Kazbegi.

Day 11 - Kazbegi

Well rested, we'll set off again this morning to explore more of the Kazbegi region's stunning countryside. It's another five hour hike, but this time to the Truso Valley, a place known for its colourful travertine deposits, situated close to the border with South Ossetia. You'll be well off the beaten track, striding through an almost abandoned landscape littered with mineral springs, ancient towers and ruined settlements. A few souls still make their home up here, but this is a remote, unspoilt and photogenic place to spend a few hours. The elevation gain is similar to yesterday's around 400 metres up and then downhill. Breakfast, dinner and overnight Kazbegi.

Day 12 - Kazbegi - Tbilisi

Today we'll drive back down the Georgian Military Highway as we return to Tbilisi. We'll probably break our journey in Gudauri, but there'll be time in Tbilisi for some last minute shopping and one more dinner of deliciously tasty Georgian food. Breakfast, dinner and overnight Tbilisi.

Day 13 - Tbilisi

All good things must come to an end and so your tour of Georgia must too. Our driver will take you to the airport in plenty of time for your flight. We hope that you have enjoyed your tour and made lasting memories of Georgia.

TOUR INCLUSIONS AND OPTIONAL EXTRAS

Included

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

Not included

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

Practical information

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

AVAILABLE PACKAGES

COMFORT - 3* PACKAGE

Dates	Excl. flights	Incl. flights*	Single suppl.
25/05/2024 - 06/06/2024	£2195	£2595	£225
01/06/2024 - 13/06/2024	£2195	£2595	£225
08/06/2024 - 20/06/2024	£2195	£2595	£225
15/06/2024 - 27/06/2024	£2195	£2595	£225
22/06/2024 - 04/07/2024	£2195	£2595	£225
29/06/2024 - 11/07/2024	£2195	£2595	£225
06/07/2024 - 18/07/2024	£2195	£2595	£225
13/07/2024 - 25/07/2024	£2195	£2595	£225
20/07/2024 - 01/08/2024	£2195	£2595	£225
27/07/2024 - 08/08/2024	£2195	£2595	£225
03/08/2024 - 15/08/2024	£2195	£2595	£225
10/08/2024 - 22/08/2024	£2195	£2595	£225
17/08/2024 - 29/08/2024	£2195	£2595	£225
24/08/2024 - 05/09/2024	£2195	£2595	£225
31/08/2024 - 12/09/2024	£2195	£2595	£225

PREMIUM - 4* PACKAGE

Dates	Excl. flights	Incl. flights*	Single suppl.
25/05/2024 - 06/06/2024	£2395	£2795	£345
01/06/2024 - 13/06/2024	£2395	£2795	£345
08/06/2024 - 20/06/2024	£2395	£2795	£345
15/06/2024 - 27/06/2024	£2395	£2795	£345
22/06/2024 - 04/07/2024	£2395	£2795	£345
29/06/2024 - 11/07/2024	£2395	£2795	£345
06/07/2024 - 18/07/2024	£2395	£2795	£345
13/07/2024 - 25/07/2024	£2395	£2795	£345
20/07/2024 - 01/08/2024	£2395	£2795	£345
27/07/2024 - 08/08/2024	£2395	£2795	£345
03/08/2024 - 15/08/2024	£2395	£2795	£345
10/08/2024 - 22/08/2024	£2395	£2795	£345
17/08/2024 - 29/08/2024	£2395	£2795	£345
24/08/2024 - 05/09/2024	£2395	£2795	£345
31/08/2024 - 12/09/2024	£2395	£2795	£345

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:

- > [Hiking in Armenia - 10 Days \(AM-05\)](#), Price from £1,395, 10 days
- > [Great Georgian Discovery - 11 days \(GE-03\)](#), Price from £1,795, 11 days

- > [Trekking in Georgia - Kazbegi Region - 8 days \(GE-06\)](#), Price from £1,495, 8 days
- > [Luxury Georgia Tour: Tbilisi, Signagi, Borjomi - 8 days \(GE-09\)](#), Price from £1,995, 8 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.

