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**WELCOME TO CAUCASUS**

12 Days/ 11 Nights

Price from: 750 USD

**ACCOMMODATION: 4 nights in Baku, 1 Night in Gabala, 1 Night in Sheki, 4 Nights in Tbilisi, 1 Night in Vardzia**

**DAY 1 Welcome to Baku**

* Arrival to Baku. Transfer to hotel and check in. (*Overnight in Baku).*
* **Meals included: None**

**DAY 2 Baku city tour**

* Breakfast at the hotel.
* Baku city tour:
* Icheri Sheher (Old City), known as a “fortress” – is a unique historical and architectural conservation area in the center of Baku. This is one of the ancient and densely populated places of the country and even of the Middle East. Archaeological excavations revealed burial vaults of the Bronze Age. The Maiden Tower (the 12th century) and the Shirvanshah palace (the 13th-16th century) are well-known historical monuments also locate in Old City. Besides them there are a lot of other unique monuments of Icheri Sheher: mosques, minarets, the remnants of caravanserais "Multani" and "Bukhara", ancient baths. There are a lot of souvenir shops where you can purchase national clothes, kerchiefs, scarves and caps, dishes and handmade carpets.
* walking down to Nizami Street (old trading zone with lots of shops and boutiques), Fountain Square, shopping center “Park Boulevard”, etc. Baku Boulevard is the second largest one in Europe where tourists can get a boat to make a trip along Baku Bay and to be introduced to the interesting facts and legends of the largest lake in the world better known as Caspian Sea.
* Baku panorama viewing from the Upland Park, and have the opportunity to have a look at Baku hotel complex «Flame Towers Baku» – a new business card of the city (Overnight in Baku). *(Overnight in Baku).*
* **Meals included: Breakfast; Lunch**

**DAY 3 Absheron Peninsula tour (approx. 15 km)**

* Breakfast at the hotel.
* Sightseeing tour of the Absheron Peninsula.
* Visiting an ancient Zoroastrian temple of flame – Ateshgah. The temple ages back to the 17-18th centuries and was built by Indian fire-worshipers’ community in Baku.
* Visiting Azerbaijan's historical ethnographic reserve - the ancient village Gala.
* In the village there are 243 monuments of architecture and archeology, dated back to the prehistoric men of the Bronze Age (3000 BC.) to the mosques, baths, premises belonging to the late Middle Ages. Covering an area of 156 hectares, the preserve contains burial mounds, crypts, dwelling houses as well as 4 storage pools, ruins of an ancient palace, 5 mosques and 3 bath-houses dating back to the period between 3rd Millennium BC and 20th century.
* Visiting Yanardag (literary “burning mountain”) to observe natural burning flame outlets at the surface*. isiting Heydar Aliyev Centre, the modern cultural centre of Baku. The structure of the center is deemed as one of the rare pearls of the world architecture and project belongs to famous architect Zaha Hadid. Its construction has begun in 2007. The architecture monument was completed and inaugurated on 10th of May of 2012. Total area of the center is 15.25 hectares.*
* In the late afternoon return to Baku. (*Overnight in Baku).*
* **Meals included: Breakfast**

**DAY 4 Baku-Gobustan-Baku (approx. 90km)**

* Breakfast at the hotel.
* Today Tour to Gobustan - the national museum in the open air, the rarest monument of the world culture included into the UNESCO heritage list, one of the first centers of human civilization. Ancient images on the walls and caves, rocks and boulders. Their story covers the Upper Paleolithic period until the Middle Ages. There are located the remains of the great prehistoric cromlech (a circular composition of vertical stones, Azerbaijani analogue of Stonehenge). There are approximately 6000 drawings in Gobustan – petroglyphs describing people and animals. Visiting Gobustan State Historical-Artistic Museum equipped with innovative technology, touch screens provided with special multimedia programs, educational and entertaining games, interactive displays, 3D video, etc.
* Visiting Mud Volcanos. Azerbaijan is the first in the world by the number of mud volcanoes. 350 out of 800 mud volcanoes in the world are located here! The mud volcanoes of Azerbaijan occupied the 5th place in the international contest of “Seven natural Wonders”, and on September 15, 2004 the largest mud volcano of the world located in Azerbaijan was registered in the Guinness Book of Records. (*Overnight in Baku).*
* **Meals included: Breakfast**

**DAY 5 Baku – Gabala (approx. 218km)**

* Breakfast at the hotel.
* Transfer to Gabala.
* Visiting the Diri Baba mausoleum in Maraza.
* Visiting the Juma Mosque and complex of mausoleums “Yeddi Gumbez” – Seven Domes, the ruins of Gulistan fortress (XI – XII c.), mausoleum of Shahihandan (XV век), Gulustan Fortress (XI-XII c.). in Shamaki city.
* Drive to Lahij village. Lahij represents an original monument of the Persian town-planning and architectural art of an antiquity. It is a medieval city with paved streets and areas, developed system of water drain and water supply. Lahij is one of known on Caucasus and behind its limits of handicraft-shopping centers. In a XVIII century, being as a part of Persia, the city has especially become famous for manufacturing of cold steel and copper utensils decorated with the engraved ornament. Lahij is historical-architectural monument protected by the state. The city is included in the international tourist route on the Great Silk Way.
* The Nohur Lake is one of the most picturesque places of Gabala that have magnificent view to Caucasus Mountains and surrounding villages with fresh air and water.
* Tugandag Mountain in Gabala. Here you will have the opportunity to ride in a mountain cable car, providing breathtaking views of the surrounding scenery. (*Overnight in Gabala).*
* **Meals included: Breakfast**

**DAY 6 Gabala – Sheki (approx. 90 km)**

* After breakfast, transfer Sheki.
* Sheki is one of the most famous and ancient places of Azerbaijan. Situated 700 m (2297 ft.) above sea level like an amphitheatre surrounded by the mountains and forests of oak trees, this ancient city was long famed as a silk centre and an important stop on the Great Silk Route. Visiting Khan's summer Palace (dated back to 18th century) with magnificent frescos and exquisite stained glass work. Then visiting of “Shebeke” (handmade frescos) workshop, “Pakhlava” (special and famous in Azerbaijan sweet) workshop and Tekelduz (a kind of weaving popular in this area) workshop. Walking along the old street and visiting of different craftsman workshops.
* Visiting of Albanian Church in Kish Village. It is located approximately 5 km north of Sheki. According to historians this small church one of the first Christian churches on Caucasus and was renovated with funds of Norwegian Government in 2000. (*Overnight in Sheki).*
* **Meals included: Breakfast**

**DAY 7 Sheki – Tbilisi (approx.270 km)**

* Breakfast at the hotel. Check-out and continue onward to the neighboring country of Georgia.
* Your Guide will help with border crossing procedures, change the vehicle & guide, continue to travel to Georgia.
* First drive to visit a Farmer’s house to see a unique wine-cellar. We will taste several sort of Georgian homemade wine and chacha(vodka). Enjoy your lunch with homemade delicious food and wine . The housewife will cook for us delicious Georgian traditional cuisine and you also will have a chance to participate in cooking process\_master classes on making Churchkhela and baking Georgian bread “Shoti”. Host will explain a wine making technology, which is the one of the oldest in the world.
* Visit Town Sighnaghi- “the city of Love” one of the most beautiful and oldest town in Georgia, which is located on the east part of Georgia. Walls of Sighnaghi fortress miraculously survived and now surround the old part of the city. The wall has 28watchtowers, with a magnificent view over Alazani Valley and Caucasian mountains.
* Visit Monastery Bodbe – The monastery now functions as a nunnery and is on of the major piligrimage sites in Georgia, due to its association with St. Nino, the 4th century female evangelist who preached Christianity in Georgia.
* In the late afternoon arrival to Tbilisi, the capital city of Georgia. (*Overnight in Tbilisi).*
* **Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, wine tasting & cooking class at the winery**

**DAY 8 Tbilisi - Mtskheta ( approx.25 km)**

* Breakfast at the hotel
* Excursion – Mstheta & Jvari Monastery.
* Mtskheta is an ancient city, it can be also called the open air museum, and many centuries ago it was a former capital of Easten Georgia. It is a spiritual heart of the entire country.
* Jvari Monastery. It is considered to be the first monastery in Georgia. According to the historians it was built in V-VI century. Exactly here St. Nino set up the cross from a grapevine and began to preach Christianity. The monastery stands on the top of the hill. The slope of this hill goes down, straight to the place where two rivers, Kura and Aragvi, meet, to prolong they way together. The place is famous not only for its cultural and historical roots, but also for the spectacular, unforgettable view on the surrounding mountains and valleys.
* Svetitskhoveli Cathedral, built in the 11 th century. Though the site itself is even older dating back to the early 4th century and is surrounded by a number of legends associated primarily with the early Christian traditions. Svetitskhoveli, known as the burial site of Christ's mantle, has long been the principal Georgian church and remains one of the most venerated places of worship to this day. The church counts UNESCO world heritage sites.
* Departure to Tbilisi.
* City tour in Old part of Tbilisi.
* Holy Trinity Cathedral ‘Sameba’, which is the main Christian Orthodox cathedral in Georgia. Continue onwards to see the Metekhi Church of Assumption which rests upon the top of the hill. The church was built by the Georgian king St Demetrius II between 1278-1284.
* Narikala Fortress by aerial cable car and take in magnificent panoramic views over Tbilisi and the Kura River. Comprised of two walled sections on a steep hill between the sulfur baths and the botanical gardens of Tbilisi, Narikala Fortress dates back to the 4th century. Enjoy a stroll to the Legvtakhevi Waterfall, located in the center of Tbilisi, and also take a walk through the luscious botanical gardens.
* Shardeni Street and Meidan Square, which are known for their outdoor cafes, galleries and souvenir shops where you can enjoy a refreshing drink before continuing on to Rustaveli Avenue. The avenue starts at Freedom Square and extends for about 1.5 km. Rustaveli is often considered the main thoroughfare of Tbilisi due to a large number of governmental, public, cultural, and business buildings located along and near the avenue. (*Overnight in Tbilisi).*
* **Meals included: Breakfast , Lunch**

**DAY 9 Tbilisi – Akhaltsykhe (approx. 210 km)**

* Breakfast at the hotel.
* Transfer to Borjomi. This is a popular health resort, famous for its mineral water springs, mild climate, and fresh air. The small cozy town lies on the banks of the Kura River. It was beloved by the aristocracy in 19-th century already, the summer residences of noble people can still be found here. The ancient stone baths were discovered in Borjomi, which means that even many centuries ago the inhabitants knew about the healing properties of Borjomi natural water. We will enjoy the mysterious silence of the coniferous forest in the National Park and taste the famous mineral water. In Borjomi, we will be surrounded by the breathtaking views of the emerald mountains and incredibly fresh air.
* Next visit Vardzia, a Cave Monastery complex where around 600 buildings including churches, chapels, pantries, baths, libraries are carved into the mountain face. Here you can see the remains of preserved secret passages and ancient plumbing and irrigation systems. The site of Vardzia represents the era of Golden Age, and it is said that thousands of monks have lived there. (*Overnight in Akhaltsikhe or Varzdia ).*

**Meals included: Breakfast**

**DAY 10 Akhaltsykhe – Gori – Tbilisi (approx. 215km)**

* Breakfast at the hotel. Check-out.
* Drive to Rabati castle - built by the Ottomans around a mosque, and St. Marine's Church The fortress was rebuilt and renovated not so long ago, and boast its picturesque city views. From the castle wall, one can enjoy the view of amazing mountain landscapes. The first military fortifications in Akhaltsikhe was erected by the Ottoman empire in XVI - XVII centuries. Once powerful walls protected the peace of the Pasha and preserved one of the richest libraries of the Muslim East.
* Afterwards continue to Gori. Gori was built by King David the Builder in 1089-1125. Here you will visit the Stalin museum (entrance included) before returning to Tbilisi. (*Overnight in Tbilisi ).*
* **Meals included: Breakfast**

**DAY 11 Tbilisi – Ananuri – Gudauri – Kazbegi –Tbilisi (approx. 300km)**

* Breakfast at the hotel.
* Our first stop will be at the Ananuri fortress. This is the medieval castle which was constructed to protect the trade route. The place is well-known not only for its reach history but also for the breathtaking views of the Zhinvali water reservoir. Ananuri castle was a scene of many battles through the centuries. It was protecting the surrounding lands from the numerous invaders, coming from the Darial gorge. Now it is a peaceful place, famous for its outstanding views on the surrounding mountains.
* We will prolong our way along the Georgian Military Road, pass through the Gudauri Ski resort (one of the most popular in Georgia).
* Soon we’ll reach the small town of Stepantsminda. This place is known as a best observation point giving a fantastic view of the gorgeous Kazbegi mountain, Caucasus and emerald alpine meadows. The height of Kazbegi is 5033 meters. We will go up to the Gergeti Trinity church on the 4x4 cars. The church is situated on the right bank of the river Chkheri, at an elevation of 2170 meters (7120 feet), under Mount Kazbegi. The church, lonely staying of the top of the mountain, surrounded with a breathtaking landscape, is one of most famous Georgian landmarks.
* Transfer to Tbilisi .
* Farewell dinner at the restaurant with show program of Georgian national dances. (*Overnight in  Tbilisi ).*
* **Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner**

**DAY 12 Tbilisi – Transfer to the Airport**

* After breakfast, enjoy your last morning in Tbilisi at leisure before to be transferred to the airport for your trip back home.

**The Prices include:**

\* Professional Guide Service;

\* Transportation during whole tour & Jeep Tour in “Gergeti”
\*Entrance fees to all Museums in Georgia
\* Narikala cable tickets
\* Entrance fees in Azerbaijan: Ateshgah Yanardag, Shirvanshahs’s Palace, Gobustan
\*Gabala Cable tickets (Second line)
\*Lunch, Wine degustation & master class in Wine Cellar “Javakhishvili”(baking bread, making churchkhela/ degustation desk (cheese, churchkhela, Georgian sweets, walnut)
\*1 Lunch at the restaurant in Azerbaijan
\*1 Lunch at the restaurant in Georgia
\*1 Dinner at the restaurant in Azerbaijan
\*1 Farewell dinner at the restaurant in Tbilisi with Georgian dishes and show program;
\*Accommodation at 4/5 Star hotels with Breakfast (About hotel types and names, please discuss with our incoming manager)
\* 2 Bottle of water per person per day

**The Prices exclude:**

\*Early check-inn or late check-out
\*Flight tickets
\*Visa fee
\*\*Entrance tickets: Heydar Aliyev Cultural Centre - 9 USD pp; Shirvanshah Palace - 9 USD pp; Maiden Tower - 9 USD pp
\*Travel & Medical insurance

*\*Prices can be changed according to dollar exchange at the time of booking.*

*\*The hotels can be replaced with similar ones.*

*\* Company has the right to change excursion days and sequence of tourist sites, according to the weather and/or other force-majeure situations.*

# For more information with prices, please contact the staff of our company. You can find our contacts in the ["Contacts"](https://www.vectorge.com/home/about-us/) section.