



ARMENIA GRAND TOUR - Silk Road Route



Day 1: DEPARTURE FROM HOMELAND

Day 2: YEREVAN – THE CITY OLDER THAN ROME

Arrival to Zvartnots International Airport near Yerevan – the capital of Armenia. Meet the guide and private transfer to the hotel. Overnight or short rest depending on flight schedule. Breakfast at the hotel. City tour in Yerevan. Visit Historical center of Yerevan at **Erebouni fortress** ruins which dates back to 782 BC – 29 years older than Rome. In the afternoon visit **State History Museum** and **Cascade monument** for a panoramic view to the city. Welcome dinner at a traditional restaurant. Evening stroll in Republic Square to enjoy the Singing Fountains. Overnight in Yerevan.



Day 3: FAMOUS WINE REGION ARENI

Breakfast at the hotel. Drive to **Khor Virap** monastery 4-17 cen. taking the best view to Biblical Mt. Ararat. Continue to **Areni** village the south of Armenia best known for its wine production and home to the Areni-1 complex where the earliest known winery in the world was uncovered. It's a 6100-year-old winery that defines Armenia as one of the oldest wine producing regions of the world with endemic grapes. Explore the cave. Lunch at one of the local gastro yards tasting local wine. Visit **Noravank** monastery 9 – 14 cen. situated over the Ghnishik river canyon and continue to the southern gates of Armenia. Dinner and overnight in Goris town.

Possibility to extend the tour to Armenia second republic of Artsakh.

Day 4: GREAT SILK ROAD ROUTE

Breakfast at the hotel. Drive to Halidzor village. It hosts a station of the Wings of Tatev - the world's longest non-stop double track aerial tramway. Get on the tramway and have an unforgettable trip to the majestic monastery of **Tatev** overlooking the magnificent gorge of Vorotan river on a large basalt plateau near Tatev village. Continue to Vardenyant's pass called also Selim pass to visit **Orbelians caravanserai** built in 1332 on the former routes of **Great Silk Road**. You can trace the Silk Road in Armenia by following its caravanserai, or inns; medieval stopping points where caravan riders and their pack animals spent the night. The Selim Pass Caravanserai is a valuable example of these inns along the Armenian Silk Road. Armenia was a part of this big commercial route since ancient times and was participating at the international commercial circle with its own products. Continue the tour to **Noraduz** village for a stop near its cemetery which is home of hundred Armenian cross stones – a unique place in the world. And arrive to lake Sevan for overnight.

Day 5: ARMENIAN FORESTS AND MOUNTAINS – Leisure time

Breakfast at the hotel overlooking the deep blue waters of Lake Lake Sevan - world's second highest and largest alpine freshwater lake. Visit the medieval monasteries on its peninsula and have a nice panoramic view to the lake. Boat trip if not too windy. Drive to **Dilijan** - a spa resort in the north-east of Armenia within the Dilijan National Park. The forested town is often referred to as the Armenian Switzerland by the locals. It features some traditional Armenian architecture on cozy and charming Sharambeyan Street where one can visit to a craftsman's workshops, a gallery and a museum or just have a nice stroll of its narrow romantic streets. Continue to **Yenokavan** village, near Ijevan town and take a leisure time at the local resort which offers different adventurous activities such as horse-riding, zip-lining, hiking etc. or just a leisure at the nature. Free time, dinner and overnight at the resort.



Day 6: UNESCO HIGHLIGHT & GYUMRI – SECOND LARGEST CITY OF ARMENIA

Breakfast at the hotel. In the morning drive to Hagpat monastery located in Tumanian region from the period of prosperity during the Kiurikian dynasty (10th to 13th century), an important center of learning. It represents the highest flowering of Armenian religious architecture, whose unique style developed from a blending of elements of Byzantine ecclesiastical architecture and the traditional vernacular architecture of the Caucasian region. It's inscribed in UNESCO in 1996. Drive to Gyumri The second-largest city in Armenia in the northwestern part of the country. By the end of the 19th century, when the city was known as Alexandropol it was one of the largest cities of Russian-ruled Eastern Armenia. Throughout centuries, Kumayri-Gyumri was labeled as the "city of crafts and arts" and it's the cultural capital of Armenia. It has a well preserved historical center where different local and international festivals and cultural events are held. Whole afternoon at disposal for city overlooking. Dinner in a fish farm restaurant. Overnight in Gyumri.

Day 7: CRADLE OF CHRISTIANITY

Breakfast at the hotel. City tour in Gyumri town. In the afternoon drive to the religious center of Armenia 20 km west of the capital. The city is best known as the location of **Etchmiadzin** Cathedral and Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin, the center of the Armenian Apostolic Church, one the first Christian churches of the world (301 AD). The city is home to **Zvartnots** cathedral and St. **Hripsimeh** church of early Christian period, all with unique architecture and all listed among UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Stop t Zara's gastro yard participating at Armenian dish making master class. Overnight in Yerevan.

Day 8: MT. ARAGATS – HIGHEST PEAK OF ARMENIA

Breakfast at the hotel. Drive to Aragatsots province which is home to the highest peak of Armenia **Mt. Aragats** 4090 m. and possible meeting with nomads. Visit **Amberd** fortress ruins on the slopes of Mt. Aragats at 2200 m. and short stop at Armenian Alphabet park en route. Last stop is at **Sagmosavank** monastery of 13th cen. with the view to Qasagh river canyon called by the tourists as Armenian Grand Canyon. Return back to Yerevan and visit Tsitsernakaberd Memorial park and **Genocide Museum** dedicated to the victims of Armenian massacres of 1915. Overnight in Yerevan.

Day 9: HANDCRAFTING AND LOCAL TROADITIONS

Breakfast at the hotel. Drive to **Garni** pagan temple of 1st cen. – the only pre Christian standing building in the region and the CIS countries. Continue to **Ghegard** cave monastery 12-13 cen. UNESCO main relic – Holy Spear. The monastery of Geghard contains a number of churches and tombs, most of them cut into the rock, which



illustrate the very peak of Armenian medieval architecture. The complex of medieval buildings is set into a landscape of great natural beauty, surrounded by towering cliffs at the entrance to the Azat Valley. The monastery was inscribed in UNESCO list in 2000. Lunch in the beautiful garden of a local family participating at Armenian bread lavash baking process. One should not leave the country without having listened to the magic sounds of Armenian Duduk musical instrument which is also in UNESCO Heritage list. Return back to Yerevan and visit **Matenadaran** manuscript depository of worldwide fame. Shopping time at Vernissgae open air handcraft market. Farewell dinner in a traditional restaurant with live music. Overnight in Yerevan.

Day 10: DEPARTURE

Transfer to airport. Departure.

