



NEOARMENIA
TOUR OPERATOR

THE BEST OF ARMENIA - UNESCO HIGHLIGHTS



Day 1: DEPARTURE FROM HOMELAND or ARRIVAL TO YEREVAN

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: ARMENIAN KHACHKARS – CROSS STONES UNESCO

Breakfast at the hotel. Drive to Gegharkunik province which is home to the beautiful **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. On the western shores of Sevan **Noraduz** village is situated. We make a stop here to visit the local cemetery where hundred Armenian cross stones are laid. Continue to Sevan monasteries of 9th cen. Lunch at the lake tasting the delicious lake trout. Continue to **Goshavank** monastery 13 cen. and Parz lake if time permits. Overnight in Dilijan.

A khachkar, also known as an Armenian cross-stone is a carved, memorial stele bearing a cross, and often with additional motifs such as rosettes, interlaces, and botanical motifs. Khachkars are characteristic of Medieval Christian Armenian art. Since 2010, khachkars, their symbolism and craftsmanship are inscribed in the UNESCO List of World Heritage.

Day 4: NORTHERN ARMENIA AND UNESCO HIGHLIGHTS

Breakfast at the hotel. Enjoy the forested town of Dilijan more known as Armenian Switzerland and drive to **Hagpat** and **Sanahin** monasteries UNESCO highlights 10-13 cen. These two monasteries in the Tumanian region from the period of prosperity during the Kiurikian dynasty (10th to 13th century) were important centers of learning. Sanahin was renowned for its school of illuminators and calligraphers. The two monastic complexes represent 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. Both of them were inscribed in UNESCO in 1996. Return back to Dilijan with a stop at Russian ethnic and religious minority **Molokans village** for evening tea from Samovars. Overnight in Dilijan.

-

Day 5: MT. ARAGATS – MEET THE NOMADS

Breakfast at the hotel. Return back to Yerevan making a semicircle 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. Overnight in Yerevan.



Day 6: BIBLICAL MT. ARARAT AND WINE REGION of ARMENIA

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 return back to Yerevan with a possible stop at a Carpet factory. Optional dinner in Carpet Factory with Master Class show. Overnight in Yerevan

Day 7: CRADLE OF CHRISTIANITY

Breakfast at the hotel. 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. 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. Lunch at Zara's gastro yard participating at Armenian dish making master class. Return back to Yerevan and visit Tsitsernakaberd Memorial park and **Genocide Museum** dedicated to the victims of Armenians massacres of 1915. Overnight in Yerevan.

Day 8: HANDCRAFTING AND LOCAL TRADITIONS

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.

***Lavash bread** is a traditional thin bread that forms an integral part of Armenian cuisine. Its preparation requires great effort, coordination and special skills and strengthens family,*



community and social ties. Women work in groups to bake lavash, which is commonly served rolled around local cheeses, greens or meats. It plays a ritual role in weddings, where it is placed on the shoulders of newlyweds to bring fertility and prosperity. Men are also involved through making tools and building ovens.

Duduk is inscribed in 2008 on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (originally proclaimed in 2005)

The Tsiranapokh (translated as oboe of wood of apricot tree) or duduk, the Armenian oboe, is a double-reed wind instrument characterized by a warm, soft, slightly nasal timbre. It belongs to the category of aerophones. The soft wood of the apricot tree is the ideal material for the body of the instrument. The reed, called ghamish or yegheg, is a local plant growing alongside the Arax River.

Day 9: DEPARTURE

Transfer to airport. Departure

