

A small country with a fiery heart

Located on the edge of Europe and Asia, Georgia, Georgia boasts both Mediterranean and European cultures. This country on the coast of the Black Sea this may be small, but it is passionate.

This country is an amazing cluster of cultures, religions and fascinating landscapes, from the snowy peaks of the Caucasus Mountains, to golden steppes and bright, colourful cities. Georgia is an incredible, undiscovered destination, decorated with many UNESCO sites that feature impressive rock-cut monasteries and cave towns, as well as millennia-old archaeological sites and dramatic scenery. Not just that, but the people are some of the friendliest people you'll ever meet. Georgians are proud of their heritage, and embrace their rich culture wholeheartedly.

Georgia will take your breath away, with flavourful dishes, fiery chacha, delicious wine, energetic dances and a language that is flowery and melodic to the ears. This will be an unforgettable experience of a lifetime!

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS:

- **Ancient meets modern:** discover eclectic Tbilisi, where you can feel the history in this city as you wander its colourful streets
- **Wine Tasting:** discover Georgia's ancient wine tradition at Georgia's best Wineries in Kakheti
- **Royal Town:** explore the charming old town of Signaghi, and visit the home of Christianity in Georgia
- **Ancient Cultures:** Svaneti and Mestia – culture preserved for centuries
- **Folk songs:** enjoy traditional Georgian Polyphony singing
- **Time Travel:** visit one of the highest and most remote villages in Europe - Ushguli
- **Black Sea:** visit the stunning coastal city of Batumi
- **Delicious cuisine:** try the incredible Adjarian khachapuri in Batumi
- **Cobblestone Exclusives:** attend private concerts, cultural events, and workshops exclusively for Cobblestone freeway travellers



The Destination

Tbilisi

Day 1 TOUR START DATE | Tbilisi (-/-/D)

Welcome to Georgia! Upon arrival in Tbilisi, you'll be met at the airport by your Tour Leader and chauffeured to your hotel, located in the heart of the city center.

*Your **Tour Leader** will be with you throughout your entire trip – every step of the way. More than just a guide - they will be your personal travel host, along with your private driver and vehicle. Together, they'll make sure you get where you need to go, and be available to stop when you need along the way. Not to mention, they'll show you the best places to eat, and help you with all the small details, from using the bank machines to showing you where to find the best gifts at the market - and negotiating for the best price! They'll share the best of Ukraine, tell you about its history, and show you the modern Ukraine. And if there are any problems, they will make sure everything gets worked out. You're in good hands!*

After check-in and some free time to freshen up, we will provide you with a **city orientation**, so you will know the closest exchange places, ATMs, and best souvenir and convenience stores.

Later on, we will enjoy a delicious **Welcome Dinner** in one of our favorite restaurants with traditional Georgian food!

Day 2 | Tbilisi (B/-/D)

After breakfast at the hotel, it's time to introduce you to Tbilisi, the city that has been dominated by traders, warriors, tyrants and dictators in turn.

Tbilisi is an eclectic city. A mix of ancient, Soviet and modern, you can really feel the history in this city as you wander its colourful streets. As you walk the Old Town's cobbled streets, past the brick bathhouses and faded pastel facades, you can discover secret cafes and hidden alleyways, leading to decadent courtyards with intricate balconies. Wandering further, you can find Soviet blocks alongside modern glass buildings, this city is truly a mix of contrasts, and manages to both be old and charming, but modern and upcoming at the same time.

Take a **city tour** around the old town, and breathe in the living past. We will visit the oldest surviving church in Tbilisi - **Anchiskhati Basilica** from the 6th century. Take a cable car up to the main citadel of the city, where you can enjoy the wonderful views of Tbilisi – the **Narikhala Fortress**. After lunch we will continue our tour around city. Discover more of the secrets that Tbilisi has to offer!

In the evening enjoy a delicious dinner in a traditional Georgian restaurant, accompanied by a colourful **folk show** of traditional Georgian Dance!

HOTEL:

Rooms Hotel Tbilisi

<https://roomshotels.com/tbilisi/>

2 Nights



The Destination

Kakheti – Signaghi - Mtskheta

Day 3 | Kakheti - Signaghi (B/L/-)

After breakfast at the hotel, we will check out. Today we are heading to the most famous wine region of Georgia – **Kakheti**. This region is known as a birthplace of wine-making in Georgia – and possibly in the world! Georgian wine culture goes back over 8000 years! The history, culture and lifestyle of Georgians are embodied in Georgian wine. It is a symbol of Georgian hospitality, friendship, tolerance and a key to the mystery of Georgian longevity.

We will visit the **Tsinandali Family Estate** and wine cellar, one of Georgia’s best known wine producers. Explore the summer home, garden and winery, before we sit down for lunch and, of course, a **wine tasting** with a sommelier! Enjoy the rich flavours of Georgian wine, unlike any you will have ever tasted before! You will have the opportunity to buy wine after the tasting.

After, we will visit the **Gremi** church complex. This collection of ancient churches and accompanying castle dates back to the 16th century, founded by the King of Kakheti - Levan. Explore the tower, marvel at Archangel's Cathedral, and enjoy views out over Kaketi.

We will then travel to Signaghi. Upon arrival, we'll check in to our hotel. Evening at your leisure.

Day 4 | Signaghi – Tbilisi (B/L/-)

After breakfast, and check out, we will explore the beautiful **Signaghi** – a fortified town famous for its delicious wine and carpet making culture. Walk the narrow streets of the Royal town, in the shadow of intricate wooden balconies, while shopping for unique souvenirs, and meeting the friendly locals. Trust us – Georgians are some of the friendliest people you'll ever meet!

After we will head to one of Signaghi’s famous wineries, for lunch and a **wine tasting!**

After lunch, we will visit the **Bodbe Nunnery**. This ancient site is one of the most important religious sites in Georgia - **St. Nino**, who brought Christianity to Georgia, is buried here.

After we'll travel back to Tbilisi, where you can check-in to your hotel and have free evening for at your leisure.

Day 5 | Tbilisi - Mtskheta (B/L/-)

After breakfast at the hotel and check out, we will travel to **Mtskheta**. This ancient city sits on the meeting point of two major rivers: Kura and Aragvi rivers, just northwest of Tbilisi. The incredible view over the meeting point of the two rivers and the ancient city of Mtskheta is one of the most iconic views in all of Georgia! We'll visit the **Jvari Monastery** to see this very view. Jvari means cross and derives from a huge wooden cross erected on the site by King Mirian III after the adoption of Christianity. In Mtskheta, we'll visit the famous **Svetitskhoveli** – a fortified cathedral dating back to the 11th century, and a sacred place, where the Robe of Christ is buried.

Next we will travel to **Kutaisi** – the ancient Kingdom of Colchis and the second largest city of modern Georgia. We will visit the **Bagrati Cathedral**, the 11th century cathedral, built during the reign of King Bagrat III and known as “the symbol of united Georgia”. We will then check-in to hotel and have the evening at your own leisure.

HOTELS:

Kabadoni Hotel | Signaghi

<http://www.kabadoni.ge/>

1 night

Rooms Hotel | Tbilisi

<https://roomshotels.com/tbilisi/>

1 night

Kutaisi Hotel TBC

1 Night



Day 6 | Mestia (B/L/-)

This morning, we will visit the **Gelati Monastery** built in the 11th century by the famous king of Georgia, Davit the Builder. The Gelati Complex includes an academy, and for many years has been one of the main cultural and enlightenment centers in Georgia. Here, they have preserved a great number of manuscripts dating back to the 12th century, and as a result, Gelati is listed in as a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**.

Next we visit the famous **Prometheus Caves** – this 1.2km-long cave complex provides breathtaking examples of stalactites, stalagmites, petrified waterfalls, cave pearls, underground rivers, and lakes. Enjoy a 280 meter **boat tour** on the underground lake in the cavern.

We will continue on, and travel through the **Enguri Gorge** where the first inhabitants, mainly gold prospectors, settled in ancient times. It was here, that most of the Colchis gold that this area is famous for, was obtained. We'll arrive to our hotel in the Mestia area, where you have an evening at your leisure.

Day 7 | Mestia (B/L/-)

Today we will explore more of Mestia on a **sightseeing tour**. Mestia is the capital of the Svaneti region - a historic region of Georgia, high up in the Caucasus Mountains.

The land of Svaneti is beautiful, wild and mysterious. Home to blood feuds for centuries and centuries, the history of this land was not always a happy one. Svan tribes fought amongst themselves, and built defensive towers in each town and village which acted as small fortresses for protection.

These **towers** are now an iconic part of Svanetian history. The lower part of the tower – about two meters up from ground level – had neither windows nor doors. A small door was built at the level of the second or third floor, which needed a ladder to be accessed – useful if attackers were coming and you could pull up the ladder!

Visit the Margiani house-museum where you can see a typical Svan house and their iconic towers. Take a **walking tour** of in Mestia. Of all the mountain ethnic groups of Georgia, only Svans built churches and painted icons. For many centuries Svaneti was, in fact, an isolated region that had minimal external influence. This led to the emergence of a unique and distinctive culture, which you can get a feel of at the Ethnographic Museum of Mestia.

After some time to rest, we will have a traditional dinner, with special guests joining us – enjoy the sounds of **Svan local polyphony** group singing over delicious dishes!

HOTEL:

Old Seti Hotel | Mestia

<https://www.101hotels.ru/georgia/mestia/hotel/old-seti.html>

3 Nights



The Destination

Day 8 | Ushguli (B/L/-)

Today we will travel to* **Ushguli** - a village is tucked away so high up in the Caucasus Mountains, it is recognised by UNESCO as one of the highest continuously inhabited settlements in Europe! Although civilization is evident here, in the form of several guest houses, cafes and even a museum, the first impression of Ushguli is of a very special, different world.

You feel like you are in one of the remotest villages in the world, a place far removed from anywhere you have ever been! The central part of Ushguli is itself an **open-air museum**, with some of the buildings dating back over 1000 years. Here you can walk among the ancient stone houses and towers, immersing yourself in the life of the Svaneti, exactly as it was in the 10th century.

After an eventful trip, return back to Mestia, and enjoy an evening at your leisure.

** Due to the remoteness of the village, we will travel by 4x4 vehicle through the mountain range to reach Ushguli*

Day 9 | Mestia - Batumi (B/L/-)

Breakfast at the hotel and check out, as today we will set off for the Black Sea and coastal city – Batumi! On the way we will visit **Dadiani Palace** in Zugdidi - a castle-like building from the 17th century. The museum houses one of Napoleon Bonaparte's three bronze death masks, acquired during a 19th-century marriage between a Dadiani and a descendant of Napoleon's sister!

We will continue our journey to Batumi. Batumi is one of the oldest cities in Georgia, inhabited from as early as the third century BC. Batumi is mentioned by Greek and Roman sources as one of the Black Sea's principal ports. Arriving to **Batumi**, check-in to your hotel. Enjoy an evening at your leisure – your guide will point out some of the best café's and bars to try local wines, and a Batumi & Adjara region special – the **Adjarian Khachapuri**! You won't want to miss trying this delicious bread filled with molten suluguni cheese. Mouthwatering!

Day 10 | Batumi (B/L/-)

After breakfast at the hotel, it's time to explore the beautiful Batumi! This seaside town is laid back and hospitable, with grape vines growing above its picturesque streets. Home to a charming old town, lazy beaches, and cosy cafes, but also is home to a vibrant modern feel. We will explore the streets of **Old Batumi**, decorated with statues of mythical creatures.

After lunch, we will visit the famous **Batumi Botanical Garden**, located on the outskirts of the city. The garden occupies 111 hectares of hilly land, and is home to a whole variety of plants. See the beauty of flora from all over the world while enjoying an amazing view of the Black Sea. Evening at your leisure to explore Batumi.

Ushguli - Mestia - Batumi

HOTEL:

World Palace Hotel | Batumi

<http://www.batumiworldpalace.com/>

2 Nights



Day 11 | Samtskhe-Javakheti – Vardzia (B/L/-)

Breakfast at the hotel and check out.

Today, we'll explore Samtskhe - Javakheti region. The region is named after two of the original Georgian tribes - the Meskh and Javakhs. It is considered as the **cradle of Georgian culture!** The road leads past arid and stone-terraced landscapes, green valleys littered with century-old fortresses. The climate and cool water springs are healthy here, and landscapes are truly impressive!

We'll visit **Rabati castle**, a stunning complex that has been razed and rebuilt many times, meaning it has the influence of many different cultures - the castle complex includes a Church, a Mosque, a Minaret and a Synagogue!

In the evening we'll arrive in Vardzia and check in.

Day 12 | Vardzia (B/L/-)

Breakfast at the hotel and check out. Today we'll visit the impressive **Vardzia Cave Monastery** – an entire city carved within the very side of the Erusheti Mountain in Georgia. Founded, in the 12th century, this labyrinthian cave complex has 19 levels, and thousands of rooms, built as a fortress-city-monastery for Queen Tamar, Hidden in the cliff face, this complex was virtually undetectable, and was protected from Mongol hoards. Today, a small group of monks maintain the complex for visitors.

After, we'll visit the **Poka nunnery** complex, where the nuns produce their own local cheeses on the territory of monastery. Enjoy a **cheese tasting** or various local cheeses. We'll then drive to Tbilisi across the highlands of the Javakheti plateau. Once back in Tbilisi, we'll check in and enjoy an evening at your leisure.

Day 13 | Tbilisi (B/-/D)

Breakfast at the hotel.

Today you have a **Free day** for individual exploration and shopping in Tbilisi. Enjoy all this city has to offer! Why not soak in the locals baths? Or taste some more local wines?

In the evening we will get together for a **farewell dinner**. A polyphony ensemble will join us at a traditional restaurant - feel the atmosphere of a Georgian dinner party, with traditional songs and the speeches of the "Tamada" – toast master!

Day 14 TOUR END DATE | Tbilisi (B/-/-)

After a free morning to stock up on souvenirs we will transfer you to the airport where, sadly, we will have to say our goodbyes!

HOTEL:

Valodias Cottages Guesthouse | Vardzia

<https://www.facebook.com/valodias.cottage>

1 Night

Rooms Hotel Tbilisi

<https://roomshotels.com/tbilisi/>

2 Nights



Tour Details

WHAT'S INCLUDED:

- Airport Transfers
- All land transportation
- Escorted tour with full time Tour Leader
- Tour in English
- 2 meals a day
- 13 nights in hand-Selected hotels
- All Events included in the Itinerary
- Internet in hotels when possible
- Interaction with local artists, craftsmen, and performers
- Special events exclusively for Cobblestone travellers
- Cobblestone Freeway t-shirt

NOT INCLUDED:

- Extra days before/after the tour
- Events and Services not included in the itinerary or marked as **Optional**
- Alcoholic beverages
- Meals not listed in Itinerary
- Flights not listed in Itinerary
- Tips for guides / drivers/ maids
- Travel Insurance
- Laundry & Telephone Services



OPTIONAL ADD-ONS:

- Extend your trip
- Upgrade your room / Get a single room

On our Cobblestone Freeway Tour, enjoy:

Delicious, hand chosen local food, and more inclusions than most other tour operators



Enjoy exclusive Folk dance/ music performances



You will be escorted by a full-time Cobblestone Freeway Tour Leader



TREASURES OF GEORGIA TOUR 14 Days / 13 Nights

TOUR DATES & PRICES:

Sept 17-30, 2021	\$ 3,696 USD
May 18-31, 2022	\$ 4,066 USD
Sept 17-30, 2022	\$ 4,066 USD

Prices subject to change.
Secure this price with your full \$500 USD deposit.

TOUR LAND PRICE:

Per Person, Based on Double Occupancy
Single Supplement \$1,380 USD

Early Bird Discount: Save \$200 USD if you book at least 6 months prior to tour date.

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