

Cultural Highlights of Armenia & Georgia

Uncover the historic treasures of Armenia and Georgia on a cultural journey through the Caucasus Mountains.



Group departures

See overleaf for departure dates

Holiday overview

Style	Cultural Tour
Accommodation	Hotels
Grade	Tour
Duration	13 days from London to London
Min/Max group size	4 / 12. Guaranteed to run for 4
Trip Leader	Local leaders Georgia & Armenia
Land only	Joining in Yerevan, Armenia Departing from Tbilisi, Georgia
Max altitude	2,410m/7,907ft, driving across Selim Pass, Day 6

Private Departures & Tailor Made itineraries available



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Group Departure Dates and Prices

2026 Dates:

Wed 13 May - Mon 25 May

Wed 30 Sep - Mon 12 Oct

2027 Dates:

Wed 12 May - Mon 24 May

Wed 29 Sep - Mon 11 Oct

This is the detailed itinerary for our 2027 departures only. A separate itinerary for 2026 can be downloaded from the Mountain Kingdoms website or requested from our office.

Group prices

Visit the holiday page of our website for up-to-date land only and flight inclusive prices for all group departure dates <https://www.mountainkingdoms.com/holiday/cultural-highlights-of-armenia-georgia>.

Single supplement options can also be found here.

No Surcharge Guarantee

The flight inclusive or land only price will be confirmed to you at the time you make your booking. There will be no surcharges after your booking has been confirmed.

Will the trip run?

This trip is guaranteed to run for 4 people and for a maximum of 12. In the rare event that we cancel a holiday, we will refund you in full and give you at least 6 weeks warning. Many trips do fill up quickly - we advise you to book early if you want to secure a place(s) on the dates of your choice.

Insurance

We offer a travel insurance scheme - please contact us for details.

Private Departures

We can also offer this trip as a private holiday. A Private Departure follows exactly the same itinerary as the group departure but at dates to suit you (subject to availability) - please contact us with your preferred dates.

Tailor Made service

We pride ourselves on the level of quality and choice we provide for our clients who want a fully tailor made holiday. A holiday will be created especially for you by one of our well-travelled experts. They will be able to advise on the accommodation best suited to your needs, the sights you should visit (and those to avoid!) and the best walks and activities matched to your ability. In short, we will work together with you to create your perfect holiday. If you would like to explore the idea of a Tailor Made holiday with Mountain Kingdoms then please call us on +44 (0)1453 844400 or see the Tailor Made pages of our website for further inspiration.

Your guide



On this holiday in Armenia and Georgia you will have a different guide in each country. We use friendly, experienced guides who are fluent in English such as Mary (pictured here) who is one of our guides in Armenia.

Your trip highlights

- Explore four different scenically stunning UNESCO World Heritage sites
- See the picturesque High Caucasus Mountains and snow-capped Mount Ararat
- Sample Georgia's world-renowned wines
- Uncover layers of history in Georgia with a tour of Tbilisi, ancient cave cities and the birthplace of Stalin
- Try your hand Lavash bread making and visit an Armenian arts and craft market
- Discover off-the-beaten-track monasteries and fascinating ancient temples

At a glance itinerary

Days 1-2	Fly to Yerevan in Armenia. Time at leisure.
Day 3	Explore the city and nearby Etchmiadzin and Zvartnots Cathedral.
Day 4	Visit Geghard Monastery and Garni Temple.
Day 5	Drive to Khor Virap with views of Mount Ararat. Wine tasting in Areni. Visit Noravank Monastery.
Day 6	Drive to Smbataberd Fortress and on to Selim Caravanserai and Noratus.
Days 7-8	Visit Sevanavank Monastery on Lake Sevan and cross the border into Georgia. Walking tour of Tbilisi.
Days 9-10	Explore Georgia's Kakheti wine region including the Chavchavadze Estate, Alaverdi Cathedral and a traditional winery. Drive into the High Caucasus and visit Gergeti Church.
Day 11	Drive to Gori, the birthplace of Stalin, and on to Akhaltsikhe via Borjomi National Park.
Days 12-13	Visit Vardzia cave city. Return to Tbilisi and fly home.

Trip summary

We believe that our twelve-day tour of Armenia and Georgia provides the perfect introduction to these two neighbouring countries that bestride the Caucasus Mountains. In size they are both relatively small, but in history and culture they are giants! Set at the very edge of Europe, they have been fought over for centuries and occasionally conquered by powerful neighbours, but have always retained a strong sense of individual identity. The world's oldest Christian nations, they have preserved a trove of historic treasures, most notably revealed in the ancient churches and monasteries dotted throughout the varied landscapes.

In Armenia, you delve into the country's rich heritage as you visit the main historical sites of the capital Yerevan, learn how to cook an Armenian meal including their traditional 'lavash' bread and enjoy a wine tasting experience. The astonishing churches and monasteries that are found all over this mountainous country are visited as you wind your way over mountain passes and through remote valleys and canyons. You will also walk on the walls of an ancient hilltop fortress and stand on the shores of beautiful Lake Sevan.

After driving across the border to Georgia you spend time in its attractive and vibrant capital Tbilisi before heading east to the vineyards of Kakheti where you can sample some of Georgia's world-renowned wines. Next you drive north towards the mighty snowclad Caucasus Mountains, to discover remote churches and admire the majestic mountain views. You'll also visit the birthplace of Stalin, one of Georgia's most infamous sons, and the impressive 12th century cave city at Vardzia.

Staying in comfortable, well-located hotels throughout, you will be accompanied by expert, English-speaking local guides who will help unveil the history and culture of these two remarkable, yet under-explored, countries.

Special notes

Joining in Yerevan/Departing from Tbilisi

If you are organising your own flights please check with the office to confirm that the trip is up and running and for the time of the single group transfer to Yerevan and from Tbilisi airport. If you book your own flights, or you book flights with Mountain Kingdoms, that arrive at a different time from the main group, and therefore require separate transfers, we can quote accordingly. We can also advise on public transport options if required.

Your trip itinerary

Day 1: Fly London to Yerevan.

You depart London to fly to Armenia. Your flight will arrive in the early hours of the morning on Day 2.

Overnight: In flight / Republica Hotel or Similar, Yerevan

Day 2: Arrive Yerevan early morning. Transfer to hotel. Day at leisure.

You will be met at the airport and transferred to your centrally located hotel where rooms will be immediately available. You have the day free to rest, recuperate from your flight and maybe do a little bit of local exploration.

Overnight: Republica Hotel, Yerevan (Meals: B)

Day 3: Explore Yerevan. Visit Etchmiadzin and Zvartnots Cathedral ruins.

Today is spent thoroughly exploring the capital of Armenia, starting with a visit to Mother Armenia, the huge statue that dominates the city and gives a great overview of the area. This is followed by a visit to the Mantenedaran museum which houses around 17,000 manuscripts. An expert guide will give you an insight into several ancient and beautiful examples. The Armenians are rightly proud of the stylish Cascades area that you visit next, and the nearby modern Tamanyan sculpture park.



The spiritual centre of Armenia since the 4th century is situated outside the city at Etchmiadzin. Your visit starts with a cooking demonstration at the delightful Machanents Charity Centre, before eating a delicious lunch in their courtyard garden. The vast Etchmiadzin Cathedral complex, known as the Mayrator or Mother seat, houses a religious seminary and offices, and is a major pilgrimage site. The cathedral itself dates from the 5th century and is surrounded by gardens full of khachkars, both original and replica, from Greater Armenia. Nearby are the ruins of another once great spiritual centre, Zvartnots Cathedral. Dedicated to St Gregory the complex dates back to the 7th century but was destroyed by an earthquake some 300 years later. Rediscovered in the 20th century it is now a protected World Heritage Site (along with Etchmiadzin Cathedral) and its delicate arches are immensely picturesque, framing the snow-clad summit of Mount Ararat behind.

In the evening you will have dinner in a traditional restaurant with music and dancing - these are popular with local groups of friends and family who join in with the dancing and singing.

Overnight: Republica Hotel, Yerevan (Meals: BLD)

Day 4: Visit Geghard Monastery, Garni Temple and Vernissage Market.

Yerevan is surrounded by mountains, and today you drive up into the hills to visit one of the most spiritual places in Armenia, the Geghard Monastery. A UNESCO World heritage site. Geghard is set in a dramatic gorge, partially carved out of the rock cliffs. You can explore the atmospheric cave chapels the earliest of which dates back to the 4th century. You next visit the pagan Graeco-Roman style Garni temple. This is set on a promontory above dramatic cliffs and is thought to have been built in 175AD. There are superb views down into the Azat River Valley far below.

Armenia is famous for its Lavash flat bread and there will be a chance to make some before you have lunch and return to Yerevan. In the afternoon you are free to visit the Vernissage arts and crafts market. This huge market is set in the centre of Yerevan in a lovely square. You may like to investigate further around Yerevan on foot - this is easily done and the relaxed outdoor café culture makes exploring a joy.

Overnight: Republica Hotel, Yerevan (Meals: BL)

Day 5: Visit Khor Virap. Wine tasting at an Areni Vineyard. Visit Noravank Monastery.

One of Armenia's most iconic landmarks is the ancient prison - now monastery - of Khor Virap. This is the closest point in Armenia to Mount Ararat, now in Turkey, and you can see the border from the monastery just a few hundred yards away. Those feeling brave can descend a steep ladder to see where Gregory the Illuminator was imprisoned for preaching Christianity - he was freed after 14 years and Armenia became the first country in the world to adopt Christianity as a state religion. There are numerous photo opportunities here.

You then drive south into the hills to the wine region of Areni, where you visit a vineyard and sample some local wine. After lunch you will drive up the narrow gorge of the Gnishik river to visit the spectacularly set Noravank monastery. After exploring the site, you drive further uphill to the remote Yeghegis valley. The small village of Yeghegis is home now to a small population of farmers who live a very traditional lifestyle.

Overnight: Arevi Hotel, Yeghegis (Meals: BLD)

Day 6: Jeep drive to Smbataberd fortress, then continue to Selim Caravanserai, Noratus and Lake Sevan.

High above the valley floor, just visible on the skyline is the fortress of Smbataberd. It can only be reached by jeep on a rough track, or on foot. It is a bumpy drive up but well worth it for the amazing views from this ancient fortress built into the cliff walls of the valley. Dating from the 5th century it has been remodelled and restored many times. After descending you drive north up into the high mountains to cross the Selim Pass - 2,410m - the highest point on the tour. Just before the pass is the well-preserved caravanserai built in about 1330 to provide a refuge for travellers in these often snowy mountains. After crossing the pass and a plateau you descend to Lake Sevan, one of the world's largest freshwater, high altitude lakes. En route you stop off at Noratus or the Field of Khachkars. Set on the edge of a village, this field of 900 ancient and modern crosses is an astonishing site, and a great place to wander and photograph this amazing array.

Overnight: Taskhkunk Chef's House, Sevan (Meals: BLD)

Day 7: Visit Sevanavank, drive via Dilijan to Hagphat and Sanahin. Cross the border into Georgia.

The much-photographed monastery of Sevanavank is set on a small hill that dramatically soars over the western end of Lake Sevan. The monastery was founded in 874 and the complex now also houses a seminary - the first to reopen after the end of the Soviet area. It will be an early start today to visit the monastery before the arrival of the crowds that drive up from Yerevan as this is a popular site. From here you drive to Dilijan via the road tunnel built in 2003. The scenery, once through the tunnel, is a real contrast to the Sevan area with densely forested hillsides and pretty mountain streams.

Beyond Dilijan lie the two UNESCO monasteries of Hagphat and Sanahin. Located in the Lori region, they are situated high above the Debed river gorge and were built at similar times in the 10th century. Once very important pilgrimage sites, the picturesque ruins are now visited for their dramatic setting which make for a great photo op. From here you continue north to the Georgian border where you will say farewell to your Armenian guide and driver and meet their Georgian counterparts.

Overnight: Strofi Hotel or Similar, Tbilisi (Meals: BL)

Day 8: Walking tour of Tbilisi.

Tbilisi is a beguiling mixture of east and west, and despite being sacked several times by different invaders has architectural remnants of the Persian, Tartar, Jewish and Armenian inhabitants who once lived here. Freedom Square, laid out by the Russians in the 19th century, is the heart of modern Tbilisi but it's only a short walk from here to go back in history to visit the old winding streets. On the other side of Freedom Square is an atmospheric area of crumbling Art Nouveau houses, slowly being restored. Your walking tour will include the Metekhi church, the Treasury of the State Museum, and the aerial tramway to Narikala, Dinner will be taken at a local restaurant.



Overnight: Strofi Hotel or Similar, Tbilisi (Meals: BLD)

Day 9: Drive to Sighnaghi in the Kakheti region - 2 hours. Take lunch with a local family, visit the Tsinandali Estate and enjoy wine tasting in the village of Kondoli. Drive to Telavi.

Like Armenia, Georgia is famous for its wine and today you drive to the east of the country to the main wine region. The walled town of Sighnaghi is situated on a ridge above the Alazani valley and has fine 18th and 19th century houses, many with attractive balconies. This former royal town is surrounded by a defensive wall with 23 towers and was built by King Erekle II in 18th century. The town had many gates through which Georgia was connected to Europe and Asia by various trade routes.

You continue to a nearby village to enjoy a traditional Georgian lunch with a family. You will sit with the family and enjoy a delicious home-cooked meal made with fresh produce from their garden.

Next you drive to the Tsinandali Estate and First Winery, founded by the famous public figure and poet Alexander Chavchavadze in 19th century. There is time to explore the lovely gardens, museum and, of course, the wine cellar, where the oldest bottle of wine dates back to 1814. You also visit a traditional wine cellar in Kondoli where you will taste Zhghia wine made from the finest Kakhetian grapes.

Finally you drive to Telavi. Here you should have time to explore the town and visit the farmer's market where there are colourful displays of freshly picked fruit and vegetables, spices and local sweets. Dinner will be at a local restaurant.

Overnight: Holiday Inn Telavi (Meals: BLD)

Day 10: Drive to visit Alaverdi Monastery. Continue into the High Caucasus to Gergeti Trinity Church near Stepantsminda (Kabezi). Drive on to Gudari.

After breakfast you drive to visit the 11th century Alaverdi cathedral before heading into the High Caucasus along the old military highway.

The Georgian military highway has been an important route since the 1st century and was only converted into a carriage route in the late 18th century. This ancient road is still important as a main link connecting all the south Caucasus countries with Russia. Today you will drive north to the High Caucasus Mountains, first stopping to visit the amazing Ananuri Architectural Complex dating from the 16th-17th century. The impressive churches and towers here were saved from being flooded by a proposed dam in Soviet times.

You will stop for lunch, as well as at viewpoints en route to photograph the stunning scenery as you make your way high into the mountains. When you reach Stepantsminda you will switch to 4x4 vehicles in order to reach the 14th century Gergeti Trinity Church - one of Georgia's most famous landmarks. This remarkable building is situated at an altitude of 2,170 m and, weather permitting, you may catch a glimpse from here of one of the highest glaciers in the Caucasus on Mount Kazbeg. At a towering 5,054m it is the highest peak in Eastern Georgia and the third highest in the country. From here you continue back to Stepantsminda, change vehicles and continue to Gudauri for your overnight stop.

Overnight: Marco Polo Hotel, Gudauri (Meals: BLD)

Day 11: Drive to Gori, visit Stalin Museum and Uplistsikhe. Continue to Akhaltsikhe.

After breakfast you drive to Gori, the birthplace of the dictator Joseph Stalin and one of the oldest cities in Georgia. The city is situated at the confluence of two rivers and was once an important military stronghold. You will have time to view the exhibits at the Josef Stalin Museum. From there you continue to Uplistsikhe cave town. This ancient settlement has houses, wine cellars, bakeries and even a three-nave basilica hewn out of the rock.

After lunch you continue west through Borjomi National Park. This picturesque highland area is heavily forested with 75% of the park covered by a conifer and broadleaf trees. Further west of the park lies the town of Akhaltsikhe which was once a centre for the Circassian slave trade and has a picturesque fort, recently restored. You will spend the night here.

Overnight: Lomsia Hotel, Akhaltsikhe (Meals: BLD)



Day 12: Visit Vardzia cave city. Drive to Tbilisi with a stop at Paravani Lake.

After breakfast you drive out of Akhaltsikhe stopping first at Vardzia to famous its famous cave city. The 500 caves that remain at Vardzia (there were originally more than 3,000) are carved from the rock face high above Mtkvari river valley. The site also includes an impressive rock church where you can see the original 12th century frescoes that are remarkably still intact.

After you have explored the caves you will visit a local family for lunch. You then drive to Tbilisi with one final stop at picturesque Paravani Lake.

Overnight: Strofi Hotel or Similar, Tbilisi (Meals: BL)

Day 13: Transfer to airport and fly to London.

After breakfast there will be a group transfer back to Tbilisi airport to catch your flight home. **(Meals: B)**

Our grading system

This Cultural Highlights of Armenia & Georgia is graded as a Tour, as described below.

Tours

Tours may include any of the following activities: sightseeing, visiting local villages, exploring temples, game viewing, birdwatching, husky sledding, mountain flights, city tours and dramatic journeys by road, rail, or river. Occasionally there will be short, gentle walks so that you can properly explore the cultural sites you are visiting.

What the price includes

Mountain Kingdoms aims to offer the best value for money. We do not charge extra for meal packages or apply local charges and try to ensure that all the key elements of your holiday are included.

What's included:

- ✓ 12 x breakfasts, 10 x lunches, 7 x dinners
- ✓ Good standard of hotel accommodation on a twin- share basis
- ✓ Local English-speaking leaders
- ✓ Single timed group transfer to/from Yerevan and Tbilisi airport at the start and end of the holiday
- ✓ All other transfers as per the itinerary
- ✓ All road transport by private vehicles
- ✓ Sightseeing and activities as specified
- ✓ Economy class return air fares from the UK (flight inclusive option). If you are travelling land only, check with our office for joining time at the airport
- ✓ Carbon offsetting with the Ecoan Tree Planting Project (for clients taking our flight inclusive option)
- ✓ A free Mountain Kingdoms gilet

Airport transfers

The cost of a transfer to/from the airport is included in the price of your holiday. This is a single group transfer which is arranged to coincide with the timings of the group flights. If you book your own flights which arrive/depart at different times to this, or we book flights at your request that have different timings, we will be happy to provide a quote for a separate transfer. Please contact us should you require any further information.

What's not included:

- × Travel insurance
- × Locally paid bar bills and laundry
- × Optional activities
- × Tips

Your accommodation

We will endeavour to secure the hotels named in the itinerary but if our first choice of hotel is not available we will book a suitable alternative of a similar standard.



Republica Hotel, Yerevan

The Republica is a three star hotel situated in the heart of Yerevan, with all the main sights only a stroll away. Guest rooms have en suite facilities, air-conditioning and tea/coffee makers as well as free Wi-Fi. The hotel has a bar with outdoor eatery and a restaurant serving international cuisine.



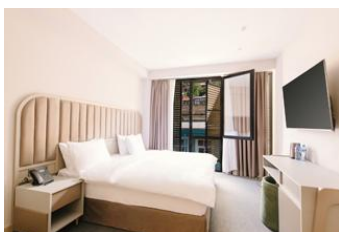
Arevi Hotel, Yeghegis

The Arevi is a small, simple hotel set in a truly stunning location with incredible close-up mountain views. It is uniquely designed and built entirely from containers yet is stylish, warm and cosy. Rooms are basic but modern and comfy and the hotel serves delicious food.



Tsachkunk Chef's House, Sevan

A charming countryside guesthouse set in the tranquil village of Tsakhkunk, offering a blend of rustic comfort, warm hospitality, and farm-to-table culinary experiences. The property features beautifully restored stone architecture, cosy rooms, and a peaceful garden surrounded by nature. Guests can enjoy dishes prepared with locally sourced ingredients, often straight from the property's own farm.



Strofi Hotel or Similar, Tbilisi

The Strofi Hotel is a boutique property situated in the vibrant heart of Lado Asatiani Street where the famous Georgian poet, Lado Asatiani, once lived. It is conveniently located within walking distance of the city's main attractions. The hotel is housed in a beautifully restored 19th-century building and effortlessly combines its original character and features with contemporary styling and amenities. The light, stylish guest rooms offer views of the Sololaki Ridge, Moghni Church, and Lado Asatiani below, and have complimentary tea/coffee making facilities and minibars.



Holiday Inn Telavi

The Holiday Inn Telavi is a contemporary hotel set in the picturesque Kakheti region of Georgia, known for its stunning landscapes and rich winemaking heritage. A modern hotel, it has spacious, well-appointed rooms that offer beautiful views of the surrounding vineyards and mountains. Guests can enjoy a range of amenities including a fitness centre, a hammam, bars and restaurant serving both local and international dishes. It also has both an indoor and a seasonal outdoor pool which offers great views from its terrace.



Marco Polo Hotel, Gudauri

A modern hotel with a wide range of amenities, the Marco Polo is in a scenic location surrounded by the Caucasus Mountains. An indoor swimming pool, spa and wellness centre and even a four-lane bowling alley are available to guests whilst several bars and a restaurant provide a good selection of European and local drinks and dishes. Standard rooms have a balcony, free Wi-Fi and a plenty of conveniences.



Lomsia Hotel, Akhaltsikhe

The Lomsia Hotel in Akhaltsikhe is a charming property that combines modern comfort with local hospitality. Located near the historic Rabati Castle, the hotel offers guests easy access to the town's rich cultural heritage and beautiful landscapes. The Lomsia features well-designed rooms equipped with modern amenities including Wi-Fi. Guests can enjoy traditional Georgian cuisine or international dishes in the hotel's restaurant and there is also a bar on site.

Meal arrangements

12 x breakfasts, 10 x lunches, 7 x dinners

Flight arrangements

Flight inclusive from price

Our 'Flight inclusive from' price is based on the best fare available at the time of printing. As airfares change on a constant basis, this should be used only as a guide price. Rest assured that, at the time of booking, we will endeavour to get the best possible price for the flights you need. Remember, the earlier you book the greater your chances of securing the best fare.

Flight inclusive packages booked through Mountain Kingdoms are protected through our ATOL bonding scheme.

Flight upgrades and regional Airports

Please call us on +44 (0)1453 844400 for flight options from regional UK airports, Business Class upgrades, alternative airlines and stopovers. Please also check our website for the most up to date flight inclusive 'from' prices.

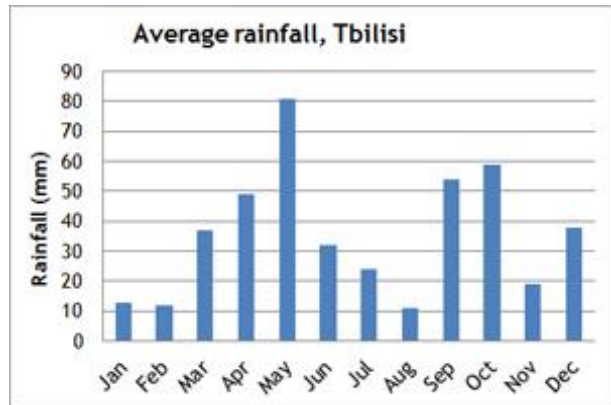
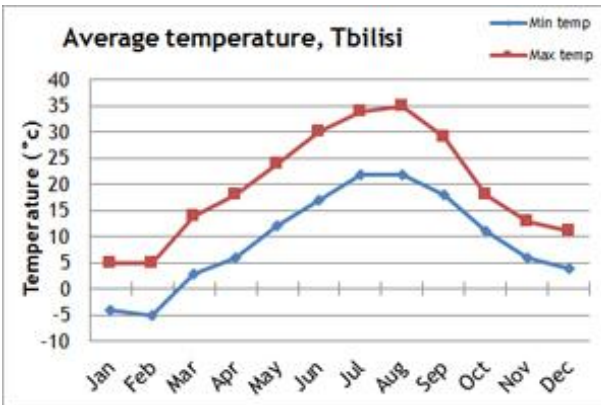
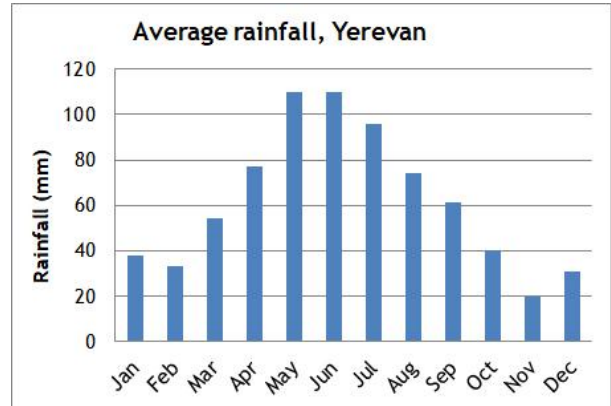
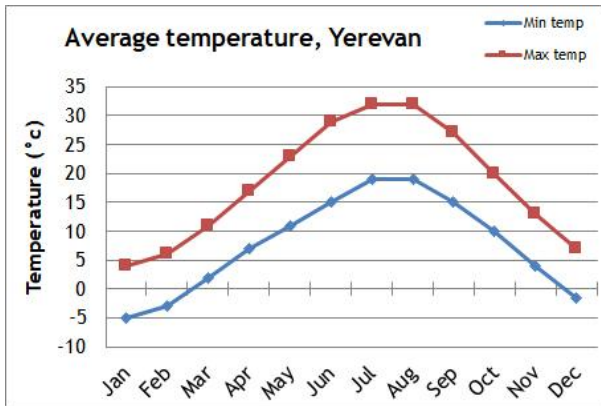
Further information

When we receive your booking, we send you a full Trip Dossier which contains details of any visas and vaccinations required, a suggested gear and clothing list and lots of useful information. If you do have queries at this initial stage do call us on 01453 844400 and we will be pleased to offer advice.

The nature of adventure travel

Every effort will be made to keep to this itinerary but we cannot guarantee that things may not change, either before you travel or while you are away. By its very nature, adventure travel involves an element of the unexpected, particularly in more remote areas. A variety of factors such as adverse weather conditions, changes to local schedules and difficulties with transportation can all contribute to the need to make changes to the itinerary, often at the very last minute. Our Operations Manager and your Trip Leader will make every effort to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary and minimise the impact of any changes, but an easy-going and flexible nature is a real asset! Please note that all timings and distances given are approximate.

Climate information



Extensions

Extending your holiday

If you would like additional inspiration on how or where to extend your holiday please call us on 01453 844400.



There are many ways you can extend your holiday with Mountain Kingdoms: you could book extra hotel nights at the start or end of your trip, arrange a personal sightseeing tour or enjoy some other exciting activities. In fact, whatever's available we can help make it happen. We're happy to suggest ideas, provide quotes and make all the arrangements.

We can also assist with flight and hotel upgrades.

Why book this holiday with Mountain Kingdoms?

- This is a well-paced, varied itinerary with time to explore all the key sights without feeling rushed.
- As well as guided tours, there is free time included in Yerevan and Tbilisi so you can explore the cities further at leisure.
- Your English-speaking guides will have excellent knowledge of the local history and culture.
- You stay in comfortable, well-located accommodation throughout, including a winery, with most meals included.
- Wine tastings and cookery experiences are included to give a taste of the local specialities.
- Group airport transfers are included in the price of your holiday.
- We research our new holidays ourselves and staff member, Seraphina Berry has travelled to both Armenia and Georgia. If you have any questions about this tour please contact Seraphina on 01453 844400, she will be very happy to help.
- As part of our responsible tourism commitment, we will be carbon-offsetting all international flights booked through us by donating funds to the Ecoan Tree Planting Project in Peru.
- We work directly with some of the world's major airlines. If you wish to fly with a specific airline, from a regional UK airport or on alternative dates to the main group we would be happy to arrange this for you. Please contact our Flights Manager, April, for flight options, quotes and further information.

If we've tempted you to take your next holiday with us, we advise you to check availability and you can do this via our website: www.mountainkingdoms.com or by calling the team on +44 (0)1453 844400. Bookings can be made online, by phone or by completing a booking form and returning it to us. We can also provisionally hold places if you need time to consider your options.

What we say



The chance to explore two countries at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, full of history, with excellent hospitality and good wines!
-MC, Isle of Man

Long on my travel wishlist, I wasn't disappointed with my visit to Armenia. The spectacularly situated medieval churches and monasteries are ridiculously photogenic and well worth the effort to get to them, often sitting loftily above valleys with mountainous backdrops. I loved the delicious food and wine and the Armenian people were so welcoming and friendly, keen to share their country with foreign visitors. Neighbouring Georgia shares many of the same attributes but feels like a very different country. I would highly recommend this holiday which showcases the best of both countries.
-Seraphina Berry, Reservations Manager, Mountain Kingdoms

Mountain Kingdoms - distinctly different

Truly independent

In an age where many so-called 'independent' travel companies have in fact been bought out by multi-national giants, we remain fiercely independent with all the benefits this offers our clients.

Value for money prices with an emphasis on quality

We are not in the business of cutting our itineraries and services to the bone to offer eye-catching cheap prices. We use some of the best airlines, and typically 3 or 4 star hotels in cities. We include the majority of meals and private transport for road travel. We use excellent equipment and appoint well-trained staff and leaders. Last year, over 98% of our clients rated their Mountain Kingdoms holiday as 'excellent' or 'good'. We are members of AITO and bound by their quality charter.

Complete financial security

You can book with us confident that your holiday has full financial protection. Flight inclusive holidays are financially protected by the Civil Aviation Authority under ATOL licence number 2973 and 'Land Only' holidays are covered by a bond secured with ABTOT.

No Surcharge Guarantee

Your peace of mind is important to us so we have a No Surcharge Guarantee on all Land Only and Flight Inclusive bookings. This means that there will be no change to the price of your holiday once we have confirmed your booking, regardless of fluctuations in exchange rates or fuel prices.

Award winning Responsible Tourism

We feel strongly that all our holidays should benefit local communities, protect the environment and respect local traditions, religion and heritage. You can read more about the charities we support and our Responsible Tourism commitments and initiatives on the following page or at www.mountainkingdoms.com.

Genuine small group travel

Almost all of our holidays have a maximum group size of just 12, plus leader. This provides more contact with your leader, readier access to off-the-beaten-path areas, greater interaction with local communities and a reduced environmental impact.

Loyalty Discount

If you have previously travelled with us we recognise your loyalty with a discount on future trips.

Booking your holiday - it couldn't be easier

Once you've chosen your Mountain Kingdoms holiday you can book online, call the office or complete and post a booking form which can be found in our brochure or downloaded from our website. If you would like to hold a place on one of our trips, whilst you make up your mind, please give us a call to make a provisional booking. This is a no-obligation, no-cost booking and we will hold your place until space comes under pressure or we need your decision.

Comprehensive information

When we receive your booking we send you a full trip dossier which contains details of visas and vaccinations required, a suggested gear and clothing list and lots of useful information. In fact, everything you need to know to give you peace of mind and allow you to prepare for your trip of a lifetime.



RESPONSIBLE TOURISM STATEMENT

For almost four decades, Mountain Kingdoms has been offering people the chance to visit amazing places on this extraordinary planet. We now have trips to all corners of the globe but are conscious that our holidays can have a detrimental impact on the world around us and want to do all we can to reduce that.

We have focused our main responsible tourism efforts on reducing the carbon emissions produced by our holidays, and counterbalancing this carbon by supporting carbon offset measures. Here are some of our current and future plans to minimise the impact of our business as a whole.

Carbon offsetting

Since 2007, we have donated a percentage of our client and staff flight costs to the Ecoan tree planting project in Peru. Ecoan are a trusted local NGO who use the funds directly to purchase seedling trees with the long-term goal of restoring 2.5 million acres of Andean land.

Ecoan maintains over 100 tree nurseries across Peru where their tree saplings are grown and then transported to planting sites during the rainy season. They use native trees such as the Polylepis, as these can survive at high altitudes. As well as sequestering carbon, they help protect against soil erosion, landslides and the effects of extreme weather on local crops. As such, they are enormously beneficial to the economic well-being of the surrounding communities. This is very much a community-led conservation project, with the local Quechuan people coming together to plant tens of thousands of saplings in the Andean highlands where they live. During the annual Queuña Raymi (tree festival), over 150,000 native trees can be planted in a single day!

For every person booking a long-haul, flight inclusive holiday with us, Ecoan can purchase and plant 20 trees in Peru, and for short-haul flights, 7 trees. Typically, we send over \$7,000 per year to Ecoan, which is over 7,000 trees.

Reducing carbon emissions

- ✓ We offer the majority of our clients a free, filtered Water-to-Go bottle to help reduce the need for single-use plastic bottles during their travels.
- ✓ We predominantly use locally-owned hotels and guesthouses rather than multinational chains. In some of our destinations, such as Bhutan, we use homestays. Not only does this type of small-sized, locally-owned accommodation have a much-reduced carbon footprint, but it also helps support communities.
- ✓ We evaluate our flights to make sure we are using the most fuel-efficient airlines with the youngest fleets and, where possible, choose direct flights for each trip.
- ✓ We have stopped offering unnecessary optional flights, such as Everest sightseeing. We try to minimise internal flights where possible.
- ✓ We recycle as much of our office waste as possible and have introduced a client portal to reduce paperwork and to make it easier for clients to manage their trips online.

Wider commitment to responsible and sustainable tourism

- ✓ We are signatories to the Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency initiative to stand alongside other like-minded travel companies to initiate best practices to make tourism as sustainable as possible.
- ✓ We will continue to support several charities with whom we have a long-standing relationship, such as Shiva Charity in Nepal.

Over the years, we have given sizeable payments to emergency relief when a disaster has occurred in the countries we operate in. We always try to ensure that these funds go directly to those who need them most to help rebuild their lives.

