



VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

Exploring the Caucasus

Georgia & Armenia

September 13-29, 2022

17 days for \$4,774 total price from Washington, DC

(\$4,295 air & land inclusive plus \$479 airline taxes and fees)



This tour is provided by
Odysseys Unlimited,
six-time honoree
Travel & Leisure's World's
Best Tour Operators award.



**An Exclusive Small Group Tour for
Members of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts**



Dear VMFA Members,

Travel with us on an exclusive 17-day small group journey through the captivating countries of Georgia and Armenia, with the grand Caucasus Mountains as our backdrop.

We begin in Yerevan, the capital of Armenia. During our stay, we visit three UNESCO World Heritage sites, including Khor-Virap, with biblical Mt. Ararat as its backdrop. We also visit the Greek temple at Garni and sample the famous Armenian brandy. We then continue to Tbilisi, the capital of Georgia, with a one-night stay at beautiful Lake Sevan en route. We explore the capital and enjoy a full-day excursion to Georgia's famous wine country. Next, we travel north through the Greater Caucasus Mountains for a stay in Stepantsminda, at the foot of 16,500-foot Mount Kazbek. Here, we visit mountain villages, take in the stunning vistas, and enjoy a home-hosted lunch with a local family. Our final stop is Borjomi, a resort town in the Lesser Caucasus range; then we head back to Tbilisi for one night. For guests wishing to continue on, a 5-day/4-night post-tour extension to Azerbaijan is available.

Space on this exciting program is limited and will fill quickly. Your deposit is fully refundable up until 95 days prior to departure. Book risk-free today!

Sincerely,

Adele "Hutch" Livingston
Coordinator of Member Travel

VMFA RESERVATION FORM: EXPLORING THE CAUCASUS

Enclosed is my/our deposit for \$ _____ (\$500 per person) for _____ person(s) on **Exploring the Caucasus**, departing **September 13, 2022**. I/We understand the final payment is due at least 95 days prior to departure. Payment may be made by American Express, Discover, MasterCard, VISA, or by personal check. **Please make check payable to Odysseys Unlimited, Inc., and send, with completed reservation form, to: Odysseys Unlimited, Inc., Attn: Special Interest Groups, One Newton Place, 275 Washington Street, Suite 300, Newton, MA 02458. You may also call Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. toll-free at 888-370-6765.**

Full Passport Name _____ Date of Birth _____ Gender _____

Full Passport Name _____ Date of Birth _____ Gender _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Home Phone (_____) _____ Cell Phone (_____) _____

E-mail(s) _____ Badge Name(s) _____

Please book my/our air from _____ I/We request a Business Class upgrade

I will share a room with _____ I request a single room (limited availability)

Post-Tour "Azerbaijan: Sheki & Baku" Extension: Please sign me/us up

Please Note: The undersigned has read the schedule of activities for **Exploring the Caucasus, September 13-29, 2022**, and agrees that their signature below represents their acceptance of the General Terms and Conditions.

Signature(s) _____ Date _____

Method of Payment Check American Express Discover MasterCard VISA

Account # _____ Security Code _____ Exp. Date _____

Name of Cardholder _____

Signature _____

Final invoicing will be sent by our tour operator, Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. The balance of the program price must be paid to Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. Final payment is due at least 95 days prior to departure, and is payable by check or credit card.

Exploring the Caucasus

Georgia & Armenia

17 days for \$4,774 total price from Washington, DC

(\$4,295 air & land inclusive plus \$479 airline taxes and fees)

Bounded by the Black and Caspian seas and separating Europe from Asia, the Caucasus lend a stunning backdrop to our small group journey. We encounter Armenia's early Christian heritage and Georgia's traditional culture, contemporary cities and breathtaking scenery, and everywhere, local people offering the warmest of welcomes.



Day 1: Depart U.S. for Yerevan, Armenia

Day 2: Arrive Yerevan Upon arrival in the Armenian capital late tonight, we transfer directly to our hotel.

Day 3: Yerevan After time to rest this morning and have lunch on our own, we meet our tour director and fellow travelers at a welcome briefing about the journey ahead. Then this afternoon, we set out to discover this modern city, once the crossroads of ancient caravan routes. We visit central Republic Square, and see the Yerevan Cascade complex of terraced fountains and the Armenian Opera Theatre. Tonight, we enjoy a welcome dinner at our hotel. *B,D*

Day 4: Yerevan/Garni/Geghard This morning we visit two Armenian icons: the citadel and pagan temple of Garni, dating to the Hellenistic era; and medieval Geghard Monastery, a UNESCO site. We have lunch in Garni village, where we see the Armenian bread *lavash* baked in a traditional oven. After returning to Yerevan early afternoon, we're free for independent exploration and dinner on our own. *B,L*

Day 5: Yerevan/Ararat Region On today's excursion to the Ararat plain, we visit the fortified monastery of Khor Virap, pilgrimage site of the Armenian Apostolic Church with stunning views of Mt. Ararat in eastern Turkey. Next: 4th century Etchmiadzin Cathedral, center of the Armenian church and the country's spiritual capital, followed by the 7th-century ruins of Zvartnots temple, a UNESCO site. Then we attend a cooking demonstration of traditional pasta and sweets, which we enjoy for lunch. *B,L,D*

Day 6: Yerevan/Lake Sevan/Dilijan Traveling east today, we stop to see cerulean Lake Sevan then continue on to the spa town of Dilijan, the "Armenian Switzerland." We visit the 13th-century Monastery of Haghartsin, beautifully set in a river canyon surrounded by dense forest. After lunch together here, we reach our hotel then enjoy time at leisure. *B,L,D*

Day 7: Dilijan/Tbilisi, Georgia En route to Tbilisi, we visit the 10th-century monastic complex of Haghpat, a UNESCO site known as a masterpiece of religious architecture. Early afternoon we reach the border with

Small Group Tour Highlights

Armenian UNESCO sites: Garni Temple, Geghard Monastery, Zvartnots temple, Haghpat • Scenic Ararat plain • Tbilisi's old town • Georgian National Museum • Breathtaking Caucasus scenery • Wine country excursion • Ancient capital of Mtskheta • Lunch with a Georgian family • Mt. Kazbek and Sno Valley • Georgian cave towns

Day	Itinerary	Hotel	Rating
1	Depart U.S. for Yerevan		
2-5	Yerevan	Grand Hotel Yerevan	Sup. First Class
6	Dilijan (Lake Sevan)	BW Plus Paradise Hotel	First Class
7-9	Tbilisi	Sheraton Grand Tbilisi	Sup. First Class
10-11	Stepantsminda (Kazbegi)	Rooms Hotel Kazbegi	First Class
12-14	Borjomi	Crowne Plaza Borjomi	Sup. First Class
15	Tbilisi	Sheraton Grand Tbilisi	Sup. First Class
16	Depart Tbilisi for U.S. (overnight flight)		
17	Arrive U.S.		

Ratings are based on the Hotel & Travel Index, the travel industry standard reference.

Cover photo: We visit the Khor Virap monastery on Day 5, from which we can see Mt. Ararat in Eastern Turkey.



Stepantsminda, at the foot of Mt. Kazbek bordering Russia

Georgia then continue on to Tbilisi, the country's capital and largest city, arriving late afternoon. *B,L,D*

Day 8: Tbilisi Tbilisi boasts a long and storied history as a key stop on the Silk Road and a center of commerce and arts in the Middle Ages. We get a taste of these cultural riches on today's tour that begins in the fortified old town. We see the Georgian Orthodox Metekhi Temple, Abanotubani thermal baths (ca. 12th century), Narikala fortress, 5th-century Sioni Cathedral, Georgia's oldest, and the pedestrian Bridge of Peace. This afternoon: the Georgian National Museum, pride of the country; stately Freedom Square; and busy Rustaveli Avenue. Then we ride a funicular up 2,330 feet for panoramic views over the city. *B,L*

Day 9: Tbilisi/Kakheti Today we tour Georgia's wine country, one of the world's oldest, a pastoral region of mountain scenery, picturesque villages, and vineyard after vineyard. We visit the hill town of Signaghi then a winery for lunch and a tasting. Next: Tsinandali Estate, residence of a 19th-century noble family; the town of Telavi in the Alazani Valley; and 11th-century Alaverdi Cathedral, a UNESCO site. We return to Tbilisi early evening. *B,L,D*

Day 10: Tbilisi/Mtskheta/Stepantsminda (Kazbegi) Today we travel toward Stepantsminda. En route, we visit the ancient capital of Mtskheta, where Georgians accepted Christianity in the early 4th century and now a UNESCO site. We continue through the mountains, stopping for photos and at the Ananuri castle complex, then cross the Greater Caucasus at Jvari Pass (alt. 7,858 ft). Late afternoon, we reach Stepantsminda and our hotel, where we dine tonight. *B,D*

Day 11: Stepantsminda More stunning Caucasus scenery is in store today as we tour the city and its

surroundings. We're at the foot of Mount Kazbek, one of six 5,000-meter-plus (16,404 ft) peaks in the Caucasus range. We visit beautifully situated Gergeti Sameba Church then enjoy lunch in the home of a local family. This afternoon we board 4 x 4 vehicles for the trip to the village of Juta in the unpaved Sno Valley, where a traditional mountain culture endures. *B,L*

Day 12: Stepantsminda/Gori/Borjomi We cross back through Jvari Pass as we travel to the resort town of Borjomi, stopping for lunch on our own in the historic town of Gori, birthplace of Joseph Stalin. Then we continue our journey through the Lesser

Post-Tour Extension

September 28-October 3, 2022

Azerbaijan: Sheki & Baku

5 days/4 nights for \$1,395 total price

Single Supplement: \$355

Encounter gems of this former Soviet republic, including the picturesque Silk Road town of Sheki in the Caucasus and the medieval walled city of Baku on the Caspian Sea.

Your Tour Price Includes

- 4 nights' accommodations: 1 night in Sheki at Marjal Resort & Spa (First Class); 3 nights in Baku at Hilton Baku (Superior First Class)
- 9 meals: 4 breakfasts, 2 lunches, 3 dinners
- Extensive included sightseeing, including all entrance fees
- Services of an Odysseys Unlimited representative
- Gratuities for local guides, dining room servers, airport and hotel porters, and all drivers



IN THE TIME OF YOUR LIFE,
LIVE ...”

– WILLIAM SAROYAN

Caucasus to Borjomi, where we dine tonight at our hotel. *B,D*

Day 13: Borjomi On this morning’s walking tour of this town known for its mineral water, we visit the local park then take a cable car up the Borjomi Plateau for views of the town and its surroundings. The rest of the day is free before dinner together tonight. *B,D*

Day 14: Borjomi/Vardzia Today’s excursion features two UNESCO sites: the medieval fortress of Khertvisi and the cave palace/monastery of Vardzia, built in the 12th century to protect Queen Tamara from attacking Mongols. Time permitting, we’ll visit 9th-century Rabati Castle in the town of Akhaltsikhe before returning to Borjomi late afternoon. *B,D*



We visit Vardzia caves on Day 14.

We return to Tbilisi, where tonight we celebrate our Caucasus adventure at a farewell dinner at a local restaurant. *B,L,D*

Day 16: Tbilisi/Depart for U.S. With our rooms reserved for late check-out, today is free to enjoy Tbilisi as we wish. This evening we transfer to the airport for our return flight to the U.S. *B*

Day 17: Arrive U.S. We arrive in the U.S. and connect with our flights home.

Your Tour Price Includes

- Round-trip air transportation from listed cities
- 14 nights’ accommodations in Superior First Class and First Class hotels
- 32 meals: 14 breakfasts, 8 lunches, 10 dinners
- Extensive sightseeing as described, including all entrance fees
- Services of an Odysseys Unlimited Tour Director
- Private motorcoach transportation throughout your trip
- Luggage handling for one bag per person
- Gratuities for local guides, dining room servers, airport and hotel porters, and all drivers



Ruins of a medieval defensive and residential tower on a hilltop

Tour Departs: September 13, 2022

Prices include int'l airfare and all taxes, surcharges, and fees.

New York, Philadelphia	\$4,474
Atlanta, Boston, Los Angeles, Miami, Washington, DC	\$4,774
Chicago, Cincinnati, Orlando, Seattle	\$4,974
Baltimore, Charlotte, Cleveland, Detroit	\$5,074
Dallas, Denver, Houston, Minneapolis, Phoenix, Portland (OR), San Francisco, Tampa	\$5,174
Land Only (transfers not included)	\$3,695

Please call if your city is not listed. Prices are per person based on double occupancy and include airline taxes, surcharges, and fees of \$479, which are subject to change until final payment is made.

Single travelers please add \$995. Your \$500 deposit is fully refundable up to 95 days prior to departure. All tour prices above (excluding airline taxes, surcharges, and fees) are guaranteed.

Airline upgrade on round-trip Trans-Atlantic flight: Business Class – \$3,495 per person from New York, Philadelphia, Atlanta, Chicago; \$4,995 per person from Boston, Dallas, Los Angeles, Washington, D.C. (Dulles); \$5,995 per person from Houston, Miami

Please note: While the elevations on this tour are not severe, the relatively high altitude reached at Jvari Pass on Day 10 (approximately 7,858 feet) and at the hotel in Stepantsminda on Days 10-11 (approximately 5,577 feet) could pose problems for guests with certain health conditions. You should consult with your personal physician if you have concerns.

For reservations and information, please call Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. toll-free at 888-370-6765 Monday–Friday, 9:00 AM–7:00 PM, Eastern Time

For further information, contact VMFA Member Travel at 804-340-1519

GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Please read this information carefully, as payment of a \$500 deposit per person represents your acceptance of the following Terms and Conditions.

Not Included in Tour Price: Airfare when purchasing a Land Only package; costs of passports and visas; personal expenses such as beverages, laundry, room service, and meals not specified; airport transfers when purchasing a Land Only package; communication charges; gratuities to your Odysseys Unlimited Tour Director, which are at your discretion (suggested gratuities: \$10-\$15 per traveler, per day); and travel protection insurance. Additional baggage fees may apply and are subject to change at any time. You should confirm directly with your airline(s) prior to departure.

Cancellations, Refunds, and Changes: If you must cancel your trip, the effective date of cancellation will be upon Odysseys Unlimited, Inc.'s receipt of your notification. Refunds for cancellations are subject to the following per person charges: **cancel 95 days or more before departure: full refund; cancel 94-65 days before departure: 25% of tour price; cancel 64-45 days before departure: 50% of tour price; cancel 44-30 days before departure: 75% of tour price; cancel 29-0 days before departure: no refund.** If you make any changes to your reservation from 94 to 30 days prior to departure, Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. will apply a \$100 per person administrative fee, in addition to any fees or penalties imposed by third parties. Changes are subject to availability and cannot be guaranteed. If your reservation changes from double occupancy to single occupancy for any reason, you will be charged the single supplement. **No changes are allowed within 30 days of departure.**

Upon reservation, you must provide your full legal name as it appears on your passport, as well as your date of birth and gender. In the event an airline ticket is issued with incorrect information you have provided, you will be responsible for charges associated with the ticket's reissue.

Responsibility: The liability of VMFA, as sponsor, and Odysseys Unlimited, Inc., as tour operator, is strictly limited. Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. purchases transportation, hotel accommodations, and restaurant and other services from independent suppliers not under our control. We serve only as agents for these suppliers in securing tour arrangements, and therefore will not accept responsibility for wrongful, negligent, or arbitrary acts or omissions of these independent contractors, or of their employees, agents, servants, or representatives. VMFA and Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. are not liable for injury, damage, loss, accident, or delay that may be caused by events not within our control, including, without limitation, acts of terrorism, war, strikes, the defect of any vehicle, or the negligence or default of any third party. All coupons, receipts, and tickets issued are subject to the terms and conditions specified by the air carriers, cruise lines, and other independent suppliers. We will make every effort to operate our tours as planned, but we reserve the right to make itinerary changes as necessary. If unforeseen circumstances require us to change a hotel, we will select alternative accommodations of the same or better quality.

Health and Medical Issues: We request that you be in good health to participate in this tour. There is a considerable amount of walking, and you must be able to get on and off motorcoaches on your own. We regret that we cannot offer individual assistance; in such cases you must be accompanied by a companion who will assist you. Please note that many of our tour itineraries, for reasons beyond our control, do not accommodate wheelchairs. Please call or e-mail us to inquire and we will do our best to answer any questions you may have. We reserve the right to remove anyone whose physical or mental condition, in our opinion, compromises the operation of the tour or detracts from the enjoyment or safety of the other passengers. In that event, VMFA and Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. assume no financial responsibility for any unused portion of the tour.

Air Transportation – Important Information: Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. includes in its tour price round-trip economy air from designated gateway cities as shown, and contracts with those airlines the company feels provide the level of service, routings, and value necessary for your entire trip. While another airline may offer a more direct connection, it may be at a price unavailable at the lower group rates. You will receive your preliminary air schedule approximately 2½ months prior to departure. **Please note that seat assignment on your international flight is usually done at airport check-in. Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. is unable to guarantee any seat assignments.** Due to the nature of tour operator tickets, other restrictions apply, including, but not limited to, frequent flyer mileage accrual, stopovers, alternate travel dates, upgrades, and airline taxes and fees. If you prefer to make your own travel arrangements, Land Only is available on most tours. **Since international and domestic air schedules are subject to change at any time, if you choose to make your own airline reservations, we recommend that you do not purchase non-refundable tickets or those with high penalties for changes. If you choose to make your own air arrangements, Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. shall not have any liability for any loss resulting from cancellation of this tour or arrangements in this tour.**

COVID-19 Health and Safety Protocols: *The well-being of our guests and staff members on tour will continue to be our high-priority. To maintain a healthy environment for travel, we will be establishing and adhering to a detailed set of health and safety protocols for all facets of your tour. We are committed to following the guidelines of the State Department, CDC, WHO, and authorities of respective countries regarding travel to a particular destination. Detailed protocols for this tour, based on conditions at the time, will be provided approximately 115 days prior to departure.*



JOIN US FOR AN
EXCLUSIVE VMFA TOUR
TO GEORGIA & ARMENIA!

Reserve risk-free: Your deposit is fully refundable up to 95 days before departure