

Exploring the Caucasus Georgia & Armenia

17 days for \$4,674 total price from Washington, DC

(\$4,195 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.



From the Khor Virap monastery, which we visit on Day 5, we can see biblical Mt. Ararat in Eastern Turkey.

Your 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 Darial Gorge • 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.

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 Odysseys Unlimited 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, we visit the poignant Armenian Genocide Memorial, then are free for 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 Georgia then continue on to Tbilisi, the country's capital and largest city, arriving late afternoon. *B,L,D*

Day 8: Tbilisi Founded in the 4th century on the site of warm mineral springs, 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. We return to Tbilisi early evening. *B,L,D*

Day 10: Tbilisi/Mtskheta/Stepantsminda (Kazbegi) Breathtaking Caucasus views await as we travel toward Stepantsminda today. En route, we visit the ancient capital of Mtskheta, where Georgians



We visit Vardzia caves on Day 14.

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*

Post-Tour Extension

June 14-19, 2023

Azerbaijan: Sheki & Baku

5 days/4 nights for \$1,495 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 Marxal 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

“ ALL RICHES COME FROM THE EARTH.”

– ARMENIAN PROVERB

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 visit the Darial Gorge, a scenic and historically significant mountain pass near the Russian border once known as the Caucasian Gates. *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 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 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*

Day 15: Borjomi/Uplistsikhe/Tbilisi En route to Tbilisi today, we stop in the 7th-century cave town of Uplistsikhe then continue on to Chateau Mukhrani, with gardens designed by a Versailles gardener and where our lunch is accompanied by fine Georgian wine from the chateau's wine cellar. Then 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



Stepantsminda, at the foot of Mt. Kazbek bordering Russia

Tour Departs: May 30, 2023

Prices include international airfare and all taxes, surcharges, and fees

New York, Philadelphia	\$4,374
Atlanta, Boston, Los Angeles, Miami, Washington, DC	\$4,674
Chicago, Cincinnati, Orlando, Seattle	\$4,874
Baltimore, Charlotte, Cleveland, Detroit	\$4,974
Dallas, Denver, Houston, Minneapolis, Phoenix, Portland (OR), San Francisco, Tampa	\$5,074
Land Only (transfers not included)	\$3,595

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 has been made.

Single travelers please add \$995. Your \$500 deposit is fully refundable up to 95 days prior to departure. All 2023 tour prices above (excluding airline taxes, surcharges, and fees) are guaranteed.

Business Class upgrade on round-trip international flight: \$3,495 per person from New York, Philadelphia, Atlanta, Chicago; \$4,995 per person from Boston, Dallas, Los Angeles, Washington, DC (Dulles); \$5,995 per person from Houston, Miami in addition to the above costs (upgrades are subject to availability and pricing is subject to change).

Please note: This trip involves considerable walking on uneven terrain in a natural environment. You should be in good physical condition to enjoy the tour to the fullest. 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.



THE SMALL GROUP TRAVEL EXPERIENCE

Important Information About Your Tour

General Terms and Conditions

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

Tour Prices

Tour prices quoted are guaranteed through December 31, 2023, and include accommodations based on double occupancy; airfare from your departure city; airline taxes, surcharges, and fees, and port charges and cruise line fees (where applicable), which are subject to change until final payment has been made; internal air, rail, and motorcoach transportation; meals, sightseeing, and transfers as described; hotel taxes; entrance fees for included sightseeing; the services of an Odysseys Unlimited Tour Director; luggage handling for one bag per person; and all gratuities as described below. Please note that the cost of air upgrades is subject to change.

Gratuities

Tour prices include all gratuities for local guides, dining room servers, airport and hotel porters, and all drivers on base tours and on optional extensions when accompanied by an Odysseys Unlimited representative. Please note that gratuities for the Odysseys Unlimited Tour Director and shipboard personnel (if a cruise is included in your tour) are not included. These tips are optional and should be extended on a voluntary basis. Gratuities are not included on "On Your Own" optional extensions.

Not Included in Your Tour Price

Airfare from your hometown to your departure city; costs of passports and visas; personal expenses such as beverages,

laundry, room service, and meals not specified; immunizations, inoculations, and COVID-19 testing; communications charges; airport transfers when purchasing a land-only package; gratuities to your Odysseys Unlimited Tour Director and shipboard personnel (if a cruise is included in your tour), which are at your discretion (suggested gratuities: \$10–\$15 per guest, per day); and a Travel Protection Plan. Additional baggage fees levied directly by the airline(s) may apply and are subject to change at any time. You should confirm directly with your airline(s) prior to departure.

Registration and Payment

A deposit of \$500 per person confirms your reservation and is fully refundable up to 95 days prior to departure. Full payment is due at least 95 days prior to departure and may be made by personal check or credit card. Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. reserves the right to cancel any reservations that are not paid in full at any time after final payment is due. If you make your reservation after the final payment date, payment in full will be required upon reservation.

Cancellations and Refunds

If you must cancel your tour, the effective date of cancellation will be upon our receipt of your notification. Refunds for cancellations are subject to the following per person charges:

For all tours (except as noted)

<u>Prior to departure</u>	<u>Charge</u>
95 days or more:	Full refund
94-65 days:	25% of tour price
64-45 days:	50% of tour price
44-30 days:	75% of tour price
29-0 days:	No refund

For Ancient Greece, Egypt & the Eternal Nile, Machu Picchu to the Galapagos, Patagonian Frontiers

<u>Prior to departure</u>	<u>Charge</u>
95 days or more:	Full refund
94-65 days:	50% of tour price
64-30 days:	75% of tour price
29-0 days:	No refund

Please note that we will not refund the cost of any unused portion of your tour package. If due to unforeseen circumstances Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. cancels your tour, you will receive a complete refund of all payments you have made to us.

Pre-Departure

Upon reservation, you will be able to access all information regarding your tour in My Odyssey, our secure on-line portal. This material includes your invoice, a detailed day-by-day itinerary, visa requirements (if applicable), Travel Protection Plan information, and more. Your final tour documents, including airline itineraries (with e-ticket numbers), will be available in the portal two to three weeks before departure.

Single Travelers

We welcome single travelers, and offer a limited number of single accommodations on each tour. Because hotel and cruise rates are priced by the room or cabin, the per person cost for accommodations occupied by one person is higher than that shared by two people. We endeavor to keep single supplements at a reasonable cost. Please note that single rooms in many foreign hotels may be smaller than those to which you are accustomed.

Changes to Your Reservation

We will not charge a fee for any changes

made to your reservation outside of 95 days before departure. From 94 to 30 days before departure, if you make any changes to your reservation, a \$100 per person administrative fee will apply, in addition to any fees or penalties imposed by airlines, hotels, or other third parties. Changes are subject to availability and cannot be guaranteed. If your reservation changes from double occupancy to single occupancy for any reason or at any time, you will be charged the single supplement. **No changes to your reservation can be made within 30 days of departure.**

Required Information

Upon reservation, we will need to obtain from you the following, in accordance with the Transportation Security Administration's (TSA) Secure Flight program (for details, please visit www.tsa.gov), as well as for our international travel partners: **your full name as it appears on your passport, date of birth, and gender.** In addition, airlines may require that we provide them with your contact information prior to departure. In the event an airline ticket is issued with incorrect information you have provided, or if you use a different passport than originally cited, you will be responsible for charges associated with the ticket's reissue.

Travel Documents

A passport valid for at least six months after the completion of your tour is required for U.S. citizens on all of our international tours. For all domestic tours, where we fly into a U.S. city to begin the tour or out of a U.S. city at the end, you must present a valid U.S. government-issued photo identification. Starting on May 3, 2023, your government-issued photo ID must be REAL ID-compliant (or you can present an alternate form of ID, such as a passport). Visit www.dhs.gov/real-id or contact your local DMV for more information. If your tour requires a visa(s), we strongly recommend that you have at least six blank visa pages available; for tours not requiring a visa(s), we recommend that your passport have at least three blank visa pages. We will send you specific visa and entry requirements after you make a

reservation. You are responsible for obtaining these documents. If you need to obtain a visa, we recommend our preferred provider G3 Global Services. If you are traveling with a minor, please contact us for special entry requirements. If you are not a U.S. citizen, please contact your embassy or consulate to ensure you obtain the proper documentation.

Health and Medical Issues

We welcome all travelers, but request that you be in good health to participate in an Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. tour. All of our tours involve a reasonable amount of walking (typically two to three miles per day), often uphill or on uneven or cobblestone streets. **You must be able to get on and off motorcoaches and boats on your own.** We regret that we cannot provide individual assistance; in such cases you must be accompanied by a companion who will assist you. Please note that many of our 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 condition or behavior, in our opinion, compromises the operation of the tour or detracts from the enjoyment or safety of the other tour members. In that event, VMFA and Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. assume no financial responsibility for any unused portion of the tour. While we do our best to accommodate food allergy concerns, we cannot guarantee zero cross-contamination.

Air Transportation

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, booking the tour “Land Only” is available on most tours. Since international and domestic air schedules are subject to change at any time, 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 changes in this tour.

Responsibility

The liability of VMFA, as sponsor, and Odysseys Unlimited, Inc., as tour operator, is strictly limited. VMFA and Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. purchase 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 or staff changes as necessary. If unforeseen circumstances require us to change a hotel, we will select alternative accommodations of the same or better quality. Cruise itineraries may change due to factors such as government regulations, water levels, or weather conditions.

VMFA Member Travel reserves the right to use photos that might include you in marketing materials and for other purposes unless you specify otherwise.



RESERVATION FORM

To reserve your place on tour, please call **Odysseys Unlimited toll-free at 888-370-6765**. Please have the information outlined below available to share with an Odysseys Unlimited Travel Counselor.

If you prefer, you may also complete this Reservation Form and mail it to Odysseys Unlimited’s office. Once this request is received, a Travel Counselor from Odysseys Unlimited will contact you within two business days to securely take your credit card information for the deposit. Your reservation is not confirmed until your deposit is paid and processed. Payment may be made by American Express, Discover, MasterCard, or VISA, or by personal check. If paying by check, please make check payable to **Odysseys Unlimited, Inc.** and include with the form. Final payment is due at least 95 days prior to departure.

Send to: **Odysseys Unlimited, Inc.**
Attn: Special Interest Groups
One Newton Place
275 Washington Street, Suite 300
Newton, MA 02458

Tour Name _____
Departure Date _____
Pre- or Post-Tour Extension (as described on tour page): Please sign me/us up

I/We would like to request _____ place(s). (Deposit amount is \$500 per person.)

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 an air upgrade to _____

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

I/We request an upgrade to cabin category _____ (for *Patagonian Frontiers* only)