



## 12D9N Venture Caucasus (HMGYDA)



Set off on an adventure to the Caucasus region where various cultures awaits you in the 3 different countries – Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan. Visit UNESCO sites such as the Hagpat Monastery in Armenia, sip on Georgian wines and look at the burning mountain.

Bordered by various nations own distinct cultures, Caucasus, otherwise known as “the lands in between” is a mountainous region, occupied by Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia lying at the crossroads of Asia and Europe. Azerbaijan, the largest of the 3 countries, were ethnically Turkic but also predominantly Shia Muslim and they were Russified by the Soviet Union, which resulted in their uniquely mixed Turkic-Iranian-Russian cultural leagacy.

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# Itinerary

## [Day 1] Singapore – Baku - - Meal on Board

Assemble at the Changi airport and begin your vacation with a pleasant flight towards **Baku**, the capital city of **Azerbaijan**.

## [Day 2] Baku - L -

Upon arrival to Baku, go on a sightseeing tour of the monumental, historical and architectural monuments of the city where you will see a panorama of the city of **Baku Bay** and the **Upland Park**.

Visit the old city **Icheri Sheher** as well as several historical architectural monuments at the same time such as the **Shirvanshahs Palace**, the symbol of Baku city. Other places such as **The Maiden Tower**, the place of merchants rest Karavansaray are concentrated in the Icheri sheher.

Enjoy free time on own at leisure along the central streets of the city, fountain square and shopping.

## [Day 3] Baku – Gobustan – Absheron Peninsula – Baku B L D

Drive along the Caspian Shore to **Gobustan** the home of famous rock petroglyphs and mud volcanoes. The “Gobustan Rock Art Cultural Landscape” - a UNESCO World Heritage site. Next, visit the **Yanardag Mountain** where natural gas has been burning for several thousand of years. Travel back to Baku for another night.

## [Day 4] Baku – Shamakhi – Sheki B L D

Today, you have an opportunity to observe an outstanding mausoleum called **Yeddi Gumbaz**. In **Shamakhi**, you can find an interesting architecture **Diri Baba**. This is a famous tomb place. Its architectural complex bears a clear evidence of the middle ages.

An excursion to **Sheki** will bring you a good portion of joy. This is the oldest city in Azerbaijan where there is another interesting place is **Shaki Khans Summer Palace** which has wonderful facades decorated with floral motives.

## [Day 5] Sheki – Georgia Border – Shilda – Sighnaghi – Tbilis B L D

Cross the border and start exploring the Eastern part of **Georgia**, which is famous for its viticulture and wine-making traditions.

Visit the **Shilda Winery** and taste finest Georgian wines along with enjoying traditional Georgian lunch. Travel to **Sighnaghi** fortified town of love where we take a short walk and then travel to **Tbilisi**.

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# Itinerary

## [Day 6] Tbilisi — Mtskheta — Tbilisi

B L D

Travel to take a walking classic tour of **Tbilisi** - you will see the highlights of the **Old Town** with beautiful Orthodox Christian Churches and Mosques.

**Synagogue** is famous for its **Sulphur Baths** and **Narikala Fortress** - the glass Bridge of Peace. We then take a tour to the ancient capital and religious center of Georgia - **Mtskheta** with its historical sites of UNESCO.

## [Day 7] Tbilisi — Armenia Border Sadakhlo — Haghpata — Sevan — Jermuk

B L D

Head south to the border of **Armenia**. After clearing immigrations, meet our Armenia tour guide and proceed to **Haghpata Monastery (UNESCO)** also known as Haghpataavank, is a medieval monastery complex in Haghpata, Armenia. The monastery was founded by Queen Khosrovanuysh, wife of the Bagratid king Ashot III, probably in 976.

Drive to **Sevan Lake**, a large, high-altitude lake in eastern Armenia known for its beaches. Set on a narrow peninsula, the **Sevanavank Monastery** has 2 stone churches dating to the 9th century.

Carry on to **Jermuk** - a spa town in Southern Armenia where much of the country's mineral water originates from. The countryside located at the high elevation resort is worth the visit as well, with canyons, forest and wildlife to explore. You can taste the tasty local mineral water of different degrees.

## [Day 8] Jermuk — Tatev Monastery — Jermuk

B L -

Proceed to **Tatev Monastery** - 9th-century Armenian Apostolic monastery located on a large basalt plateau. Enjoy lunch in a local house. After that, get to/from monastery by cable car.

## [Day 9] Jermuk — Noravank — Tushpa Winery — Khor Virap — Yerevan

B L D

Depart to **Noravank Monastery** which is a 13th-century Armenian monastery, it is known for its tall, sheer brick-red cliffs, directly across from the monastery. Drive to **Tushpa Winery** and visit to a family who owns it.

Depart to **Khor Virap** the site of royal prison where St Gregory the illuminator was held for thirteen years before converting Armenia into the first Christian nation in 301. Go on a tour to explore the site, with its underground chambers, elegant chapels and ascetic atmosphere.

## [Day 10] Yerevan

B L D

Head to the city of **Yerevan**, Armenia's capital. Start the excursion to **Matenadaran**, which is the library that houses thousands of ancient Greek and Armenian manuscripts.

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# Itinerary

We will then head to **Republic Square**, the city's core, with musical water fountains and colonnaded government buildings. Next, drive to **Garni temple** and **Geghard monastery**. On the way, we will stop by at the **Arch of Charents** where you can get a splendid view of the Biblical Ararat valley.

Take a trip to the cave monastery **Geghard**, the tomb of the princess Proshyan. It consists of a large overhead temple and three churches hewn in solid rock. There are also hundreds of natural and artificial caves in the vicinity.

The trip continues to the pagan temple, **Garni** (77 AD) where we will tour the **Temple of the Sun and the ancient royal bath**, the only Hellenistic temple preserved up to now in the region. The temple is located on the edge of the scenic gorge.

Enjoy lunch in the restaurant **Garni Tun** with the Armenian bread - Lavash. You will get to learn how the bread is prepared as well. Lastly, return to Yerevan for dinner with national live music.

[Day 11 & Day 12] Yerevan – Singapore

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Bid farewell to Yerevan as we transfer to the airport for our flight home, bringing fond memories of your holidays with H.I.S. Travel!

**\*Tipping: €84**

