Journey Through the South Caucasus:
An In-Depth Look at Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia
May 8-22, 2019

with Alexandra Vacroux, executive director of the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies at Harvard University
Traverse the three culturally diverse Caucasus countries of Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia, next-door neighbors on a mountainous strip of land between the Caspian and the Black Seas. With their important place in history at the crossroads of trade, religion, and the arts, these countries host fascinating modern cultures, as well as some of the earth’s most ancient and ageless architecture. Discover the bold designs of Azerbaijan’s carpets, and trace its relationship with an underground treasure of oil and gas that dates back to the time of Zarathustra. In exuberant Georgia, savor the country’s deep red wines, rich cuisine, and incredible museums and archaeological sites, and explore UNESCO-listed Mtskheta, capital of the ancient Georgian kingdom of Iberia beginning in the third century BC. In Armenia, the world’s first Christian country, visit powerful little stone churches from the first millennium, and admire the country’s oldest art form, the sculpted stone khachkar crosses that dot the green hillsides.

Activity Level 4: ![Activity Level 4 Icon](https://i.imgur.com/4.png) ![Activity Level 4 Icon](https://i.imgur.com/4.png) ![Activity Level 4 Icon](https://i.imgur.com/4.png) ![Activity Level 4 Icon](https://i.imgur.com/4.png) ![Activity Level 4 Icon](https://i.imgur.com/4.png)

**UP FOR A CHALLENGE**

This trip is moderately active due to the substantial distances covered, the length of some bus rides, the extensive walking and stair climbing required, and the overall shortcomings of the tourism infrastructure. The itinerary features a significant amount of touring on foot. Some attractions are only accessible via steep staircases with tall, uneven steps, and some of the monastery visits involve steep steps inside narrow passageways with limited light. To fully enjoy this adventure, travelers must be able to walk at least a mile a day; flexibility and a willingness to accept local standards of amenities and services are highly recommended as well.

TO BOOK A TRIP, CALL 800-422-1636 OR VISIT ALUMNI.HARVARD.EDU/TRAVEL
Trip Sampling

**LAND & RAIL**

- **Tanzania Migration Safari**
  MAR 10–20, 2019
  Bence Ölveczky

- **Private Homes & Gardens Of Bermuda**
  APR 1–5, 2019
  Michael Weishan

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  APR 6–23, 2019

- **HBS Morocco Explorer**
  APR 24–MAY 5, 2019
  Kay Shelemay

- **HMSC Uganda Safari & Primate Trekking**
  MAY 31–JUN 13, 2019
  Elizabeth Ross & Richard Wrangham

- **Gateway To Authentic Ireland**
  JUN 7–17, 2019
  Catherine McKenna

- **Scotland's Orkney & Shetland Islands Hiking Adventure**
  AUG 23–SEP 2, 2019
  Daniel Smail

- **Azores Getaway**
  OCT 11–14, 2019
  Jeremiah Trimble

**CRUISES**

- **A Cruise Of The Panama Canal & Costa Rica On Le Champlain**
  FEB 2–10, 2019
  Don Pfister

- **Cuba By Land & Sea On Le Ponant**
  FEB 3–12, 2019
  Elizabeth Cohen & Herrick Chapman

- **Arctic Expedition: Spitsbergen And Svalbard On L’Austral**
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  James Engell

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  SEP 8–19, 2019

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  OCT 3–11, 2019
  Leo Darnrosch & Joyce Van Dyke

**RIVERS & LAKES**

- **Cruising The Mekong River: Vietnam & Cambodia On Mekong Princess**
  JAN 14–27, 2019
  Susan Suleiman

- **The Pride Of South Africa, Namibia, Botswana & Zimbabwe**
  MAR 14–30, 2019
  Suzanne Blier

- **Normandy To Paris: Commemorating The 75th Anniversary Of D-Day**
  JUN 4–13, 2019
  Charles Maier

**FAMILY ADVENTURES**

- **Greece: A Family Odyssey On Running On Waves**
  JUN 19–28, 2019
  Jonathan Walton

- **China Family Tour: Imperial Gran- deur, Terracotta Warriors, Giant Pandas**
  JUN 21–JUL 3, 2019
  R. Nicholas Burns

- **HMSC Galápagos Family Adventure On La Pinta**
  JUN 23–JUL 2, 2019
  Brian Farrell
WEDNESDAY-THURSDAY, MAY 8-9
USA/Baku, Azerbaijan
Depart USA on flights bound for Baku, Azerbaijan. In flight

FRIDAY, MAY 10
Baku
Take a walk through Baku’s UNESCO-listed Old City, the best place to get a sense of its history. Completely encircled by old city walls and medieval gates, the winding streets and alleyways here are home to private residences, mosques and madrassahs, carpet merchants, and tiny shops. Visit the State Museum of Azerbaijani Carpets and Applied Folk Art, displaying the vivid colors and bold designs of Azeri, Caucasian, and Iranian textiles, then tour the interior of the Heydar Aliyev Cultural Center, the swooping building designed by famed Iraqi-British architect Zaha Hadid that has become a landmark of modern Baku. Stop at the Nobel Brothers’ Museum/Villa Petrolea for a private reception. Enjoy a welcome dinner this evening with authentic Azeri dishes and traditional mugham music. Hilton Hotel Baku (B, L, D)

SATURDAY-SUNDAY, MAY 11-12
Gobustan • Shemakha • Sheki
Before setting out for Sheki, make a stop in Gobustan, an important site of ancient petroglyphs added to the UNESCO World Heritage list in 2007, as well as the town of Shemakha, the former capital of the once powerful Shirvan Khanate. Sheki is one of the oldest towns in Azerbaijan, said to have been founded some 2,700 years ago. Embark on a walking tour of the town, exploring the local crafts market where old-fashioned manufacturing is alive and well, and stopping in at a local bakery to sample baklava or halvah. Visit the mosaic-covered Khan’s Summer Palace with its brilliant stained glasswork called shebeke, as well as the fortress that surrounds the palace with its history and crafts museums. Enjoy dinner in an authentic 18th-century caravanserai. Sheki Saray Hotel (2B, 2L, 2D)

MONDAY-TUESDAY, MAY 13-14
Gurjaani, Georgia • Signagi • Tbilisi
Drive to the Georgian border and discover the heart of Georgia’s wine country, Kakheti. Make a stop in Gurjaani, a town renowned for its white wine, and experience a traditional “Georgian Table” lunch, enjoying the wonderful local food and drink and learning more about Georgian culinary traditions. Stroll the charming, cobblestoned streets of the fortress town of Signagi, and visit the 9th-century Bodbe Nunnery, once used as a coronation venue by the kings of Kakheti. Explore beautiful Tbilisi, including the 4th century Narikala Fortress, the Mother Georgia monument, the city’s oldest church — Anchishkhat Basilica — Sioni Cathedral, and the 19th-century caravanserai. Stroll lively Rustaveli Avenue, the city’s main thoroughfare, making stops along the way at a working bakery and a craft studio. Admire one of the largest collections of gold decorative arts at the Georgian National Museum, and honor the almost 900,000 Georgians who were killed or deported during the Soviet years between 1921 and 1991 at the Museum of Soviet Occupation. Gather for a private reception and tour at the house museum of influential Georgian artist Elene Akhvediani, then enjoy dinner at one of Tbilisi’s many restaurants, accompanied by a performance of traditional Georgian music and dance. Tbilisi Marriott Hotel (2B, 2L, 1D)

FOR DETAILED ITINERARIES, VISIT ALUMNI.HARVARD.EDU/TRAVEL
WEDNESDAY-FRIDAY, MAY 15-17
**Tbilisi with day trips**

Drive out of town to Mtskheta, the UNESCO-listed capital of the early kingdom of Iberia, and survey the stunning Svetitskhoveli Cathedral, a prime example of Georgia’s medieval architecture and a sacred pilgrimage destination. Continue to the Ananuri fortress complex, built by the 17th century dukes of the Aragvi Valley in one of Georgia’s most beautiful places. Explore the archeological sites of Dmanisi, where some of the earliest hominids found outside of Africa were discovered, and Sakdrisi, which shows evidence of human gold mining from the 3rd century BC. Meet with local archaeologists at both sites to learn more about these remarkable excavations and their importance in understanding the path of human evolution.

On the way to Gori, Stalin’s hometown, stop in the temporary refugee village of Tserovani, where thousands of displaced individuals live in small, private cottages. Meet with people who live in the village, visit the local school, and tour the small businesses set up with the help of USAID to support the population. Visit the Stalin House Museum, located in the original wooden hut where the infamous leader spent his childhood, then continue to the nearby cave town of Uplistsikhe, where people may have populated the naturally occurring caves here since before 1000 BC. Enjoy a stirring performance of traditional polyphonic singing over a dinner of delicious Georgian specialties.

**Tbilisi Marriott Hotel (3B, 3L, 2D)**

SATURDAY-SUNDAY, MAY 18-19

**Haghbat, Armenia • Yerevan (Armenia)**

On the way to Armenia, visit the UNESCO-listed monasteries of Haghbat and Sanahin, an introduction to Armenia’s rich and ancient spiritual history. Arrive in Yerevan, the capital of Armenia, older even than Rome. Discover the charming lanes of the Old Town and Republic Square, and pay your respects at the sobering Genocide Memorial, commemorating the lives of over one million Armenians that perished as a result of policies of the last Ottoman government between 1914 and 1918. Browse among some of the oldest books in the world at the Matenadaran Museum, and tour the Yerevan Brandy Factory, sampling some of the wares at the tasting bar.

**Marriott Yerevan Hotel (2B, 2L, 2D)**

MONDAY-TUESDAY, MAY 20-21

**Yerevan with day trips**

Explore Echmiadzin, a UNESCO site and the spiritual center of Armenia, as well as the fabulous treasury at Hripsimeh Martyria Church and the 7th century Zvartnots Cathedral. Enjoy an opportunity to meet with a specially invited local guest for dinner and a presentation about Armenia’s current affairs and issues facing the country. Admire the Monastery of Khor Virap, with fantastic views of Mt. Ararat, and hear a private a cappella concert at pagan Garni Temple. Visit the UNESCO-listed, 12th-century cave monastery of Geghard, carved into the side of a mountain, and one of the most fascinating monuments in Armenia. Enjoy a festive farewell dinner.

**Marriott Yerevan Hotel (2B, 2L, 2D)**

WEDNESDAY, MAY 22

**Depart Yerevan**

The journey concludes with transfers to the airport.

(B, in flight)
Program Highlights

• Enjoy a performance of Azerbaijani mugham, a musical fusion of Persian and Turkic traditions honored as a World Cultural Masterpiece by UNESCO.

• Experience an authentic “Georgian Table,” a traditional celebration of food and wine.

• Meet with locals in the temporary refugee village of Tserovani, where the Georgian government set up 2200 individual cottages to support thousands of internally displaced individuals.

• Explore Echmiadzin, the UNESCO site known as the spiritual center of Armenia.

• Enjoy a private concert of sacred music at the Garni Temple.

Cost

• $8,595 per person double occupancy

• $10,020 single occupancy

• GROUP SIZE: 10-30

AIR ARRANGEMENTS International airfare is not included in the cost of the program. The tour operator can assist you with your air arrangements. Neither Harvard Alumni Travels nor the tour operator accepts the liability for any airline cancellation penalty incurred by the purchase of a non-refundable airline ticket. The air ticket when issued shall constitute the sole contract between the passenger and the airline concerned.

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Lectures by Harvard study leader; accommodations and meals as listed in the detailed itinerary; private coach for all touring and transportation per the itinerary; group arrival and departure transfers if arriving/departing on the start/end dates; all sightseeing and excursions including entrance fees per itinerary; local English speaking guides; special cultural features as stated in itinerary; services of a tour manager throughout the program; special Welcome & Farewell receptions; bottled/purified water with meals; beverages, local beer and wine with lunches/dinners; all gratuities including to tour manager, local guides, drivers; baggage handling at the hotels and train station where available. $200,000 medevac emergency evacuation insurance.

TOUR COST EXCLUSIONS
International airfare between the U.S. and the start and ending cities; air taxes or fuel surcharges; pre- or post-tour services; independent travel arrangements, visa or passport fees; medical and trip cancellation/interruption insurance; evacuation costs; food or beverages not included in group meals; items of a personal nature such as laundry, alcohol, telephone expense, excess baggage fees, photo/video expenses inside museums (where allowed); other items not expressly listed as included.

RESERVATIONS, DEPOSITS, & FINAL PAYMENT
To reserve a space, a $1,000 refundable deposit is required per person. Please either call us at 800-422-1636 or 617-496-0806 or fill out and mail or fax the registration form found in the back of this brochure. Reservations are acknowledged in order of receipt until the maximum enrollment has been reached. Payment terms will be sent to you with your reservation confirmation from our partner company.

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Or by FAX: 617-496-4011

Please call with any questions:
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How did you hear about this trip?

PROGRAM NAME
START DATE

FIRST PERSON NAME ON PASSPORT
DATE OF BIRTH

EMAIL ADDRESS

STREET ADDRESS

CITY / STATE / ZIP OR POSTAL CODE

HOME TELEPHONE
WORK TELEPHONE

SECOND PERSON NAME ON PASSPORT
DATE OF BIRTH

EMAIL ADDRESS

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CITY / STATE / ZIP OR POSTAL CODE

HOME TELEPHONE
WORK TELEPHONE

METHOD OF DEPOSIT

CHECK (please enclose check)

VISA

MCARD

EXP. DATE

SECURITY CODE

NAME AS IT APPEARS ON CARD

I/WE CONFIRM THAT I/WE HAVE READ AND ACCEPT THE GENERAL INFORMATION FOR THIS TOUR, INCLUDING REFUNDS AND CANCELLATIONS AND THE RESPONSIBILITY CLAUSE AT ALUMNI.HARVARD.EDU/TRAVEL.

SIGNATURE

SIGNATURE

ACCOMMODATIONS

CATEGORY PREFERENCE

DOUBLE ROOM
SINGLE ROOM
SHARE A ROOM WITH

ROOMMATE