

MULTI ACTIVITY ARMENIA

Character:

For those who want to do it all in one great Armenia multi activity adventure! Walk at Hermits' Trail, try canoeing or go back in time horse riding at Lake Arpi National Park, head into perfect wilderness by 4WD and bike at Mount Hovasar to meet friendly shepherds.

Duration:

7 days / 7 nights

Accommodation:

Superior hotels, local guesthous, camping (1 night)

Meals:

7 breakfasts, 3 lunches, 3 dinners

Mode of travel:

Comfortable 4WD vehicles

Tour support:

AdvenTour tour leader /driver, local guides

Included:

Accommodation for 10 nights

Meals as specified in the itinerary

AdvenTour tour leader/driver, local guides

All activities as per itinerary

All transfers in comfortable 4WD vehicles

Travel permits in protected areas

Outdoor Armenia information kit

Excluded:

Optional activities

Itinerary

Day 1

Yerevan New and Old

The day starts with a quick pre-tour orientation meeting with your tour leader followed by an introductory cultural tour of Yerevan, new and old. We start our exploration with the Republic Square with its magnificent buildings enhanced by singing fountains, continue to Erebouni Fortress, the birthplace of Yerevan. Explore the impressive ruins and drive to the Railway Station to see the beautiful monument of David of Sasun, national hero. On to Mashtots Avenue, past Blue Mosque and huge fruit market to reach Cascade. Later we drive to south, catch our last view of Mount Ararat and descend to the sleepy town of Vayk. After the drive, here is a chance to relax and enjoy the peace and quiet of our hotel.

Overnight: Hotel in Vayk

Meal plan: Breakfast

Day 2

Hiking at Hermits Trail

We offer a unique option this afternoon, hiking the Hermits' Trail. Transfer by jeep to Jafar hill station to start the day's hike. After an hour's walk you can see Noravank Monastery in the distance – a sudden and dramatic sight amid surreal red rocks. Continue walking and come to a pleasant picnic area under rosehip trees, where there is time to relax, enjoy your lunch and share your thoughts. After rest continue to reach an abandoned military point, walk down the gorge, cross the river and hike your last hour to reach Noravank. This is around 6 hours' hike through exciting terrain, ranging from steep rocky paths down to tree-studded ravines, then to open, grassy hilltops. Take a guided tour of the monastery, examine the exquisite carvings, precious cross-stones and cliffs that have long been a mecca for climbers. In the evening dinner with local wine at farmhouse, the head of the family will act as your toastmaster governing the event according to age-old rules of Caucasian hospitality. For those feeling energetic there is an opportunity to explore caverns of Mosrov decorated with stalactites and stalagmites of amazing color and diversity (caving gear provided). Transfer for overnight to your secluded fixed mountain camp in magic Gnishik gorge (fresh water supply, shower/toilets, comfortable sleeping tents and dining area).

Overnight: Mountain camp

Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Day 3

Into the Wilderness by 4WD

Wake up to the aroma of hot coffee. We start early to beat the heat of the day. Today's ride follows the spectacular route of Her-Her trail. You'll be amazed by what a four-wheel-drive vehicle can do: traversing mud, holes and hillsides so steep you'll have to fight to stay in your seat! It starts with gravel tracks across high altitude plains and remote villages, is followed by hard climbs but the thrill of visiting this land of rugged beauty is ample reward. This is a hard but rewarding trip, with extended periods at high altitudes, a real extreme day. Traverse Selim Pass with amazingly intact Selim Caravanserai to arrive at the shores of Lake Sevan.

Overnight: Hotel at Lake Sevan

Meal plan: Breakfast

Day 4

Swim and Relax at Lake Sevan

There has to be an easy day on your holiday and this is it! Enjoy on your own at the beach or relax in a coffee shop catching up on your post cards. For nature lovers there is the option of bird watching at Gulls' Island. If you choose this option, your bird watching guide will pick you from the hotel and drive to the area. Another attractive option is a boat ride to Noratus to explore unique Stone Garden. Your leader can also arrange a hiking trip to Artanish Peninsula guided by a local guide for splendid views of Greater and Lesser Sevan.

Overnight: Hotel at Lake Sevan

Meal plan: Breakfast

Days 5-6

Flexible activity days at Lake Arpi National Park

Transfer to Lake Arpi National Park, a high mountain plateau of volcanic origin with mountain steppes, sub-alpine grasslands and crystal-clear rivers (2,000-3,196m above sea level). The area harbors unique ecosystems with many unusual species and is covered with a carpet of alpine flowers of rare beauty. You can select your preferred activities here - walking, biking, horse back or canoeing - perfect ways to discover hidden corners and feel at one with nature. We have local outfitters, Ana and Arthur, so the group can be split according to preferences. We will use 4WD to travel to the start and end of walks/rides, affording us flexibility to follow the trails based on the ability of group. We will spend our days hiking or biking at beautiful trails to discover Paleolithic sites perched on the edge of rocks, dramatic gorges and passages cut into steep cliff face and graceful waterfalls hidden between rocks. Those preferring canoeing will spend a fun day out canoeing in open boats at river Akhuryan. Starting at the source, they will go through beautiful meadows and end the trip in dramatic Khorank Gorge. Horse riders will be transferred to the small village of Darik for guided riding at green hills above the village. We will all visit local farms, chat with friendly locals, have lunch and refresh at beautiful springs. We spend 2 nights at a local guesthouse (shared facilities).

Overnights: *Local guesthouse*

Meal plan: *2 Breakfasts, 2 lunches*

Days 7

Free Day in Yerevan

Departure from Lake Arpi for a free afternoon in Yerevan at your own pace - last minute shopping and a final evening out in the city. You may wish to wander in the labyrinth of Vernisage arts and crafts market, climb up to Mayr Hayastan monument to get a bird's eye view of the city or climax your day with a visit to Yerevan Brandy Company to explore the secrets of making the delicious, internationally acclaimed beverage, the favourite of Sir Winston Churchill.

Overnight: *Hotel in Yerevan*

Meal plan: *Breakfast*

Tour Notes

1. Special notes

The information in these Special Notes covers the average range of conditions likely to be found on this trip. In remote destinations unexpected conditions can prevail at any time, and all adventurous holidays can therefore be subject to unexpected changes; in order to enjoy them you should be prepared to be flexible where necessary.

2. Travel health and insurance

No vaccination is required for traveling in the Caucasus. The region's climate is very pleasant, with no health risks. Water is very clean and safe. However, travelers usually prefer bottled spring and mineral water, which can be found in shops and supermarkets.

There are registered pharmacies in all cities and towns with all basic medications. Travelers with special needs are advised to take a supply of those medications that they are likely to require. Medical facilities are numerous with many qualified doctors practicing in all specialties. Doctors and hospitals often expect cash payment for their services. Travelers are advised to consult their medical insurance company prior to traveling to confirm whether their policy applies overseas and covers emergency expenses such as medical evacuation. When selecting a travel insurance policy we require that it cover medical expenses including emergency repatriation and personal liability. We also strongly recommend that the policy cover loss of luggage and personal effects.

3. Conditions

- Hiking

Trails are almost always good though we occasionally come across rough sections in mountains and valleys. Climbing to mountain peaks is optional. Technical experience is not a must. Normally we will walk between 4 to 6 hours per day. Walking during the first day of the hike should provide adequate acclimatization for higher altitudes.

- 4WD

Road conditions are mostly good. In the mountains we use off-road trails developed by our experts and ensuring maximum off-road fun. The environments we travel through are fragile. It is our responsibility as visitors to minimize the impact of our presence.

- Horse riding

Horse riding routes/trails are developed by our experts. Routes vary from alpine meadows to forests.

- Cycling

The roads are country roads between villages and little towns, quite peaceful, sometimes without cars, often used by carts and herds. Quiet tarmac roads are used where necessary. Cycling is not difficult though some tracks are rough in parts.

Grading A - moderate

Involves some longer walking/horse riding/cycling generally at low altitudes below 2,500 m. The tour is designed within the capabilities of those with normal physical fitness, but previous experience would be beneficial.

4. Money

You will need to allow enough money for meals as well as optional activities. An average meal in a restaurant should cost between EUR 8-10. Tipping is customized and not compulsory. You should be aware that Caucasus is still a cash-only economy and credit cards are not accepted in the majority of shops and restaurants. There are several ATM machines in major cities where you can obtain cash.

5. Communication during the tour

If you need to be contacted while traveling we recommend that you set up an email address that can be accessed on the road. Email cafes are common and are the preferred way for our leaders and travelers to stay in touch.

If someone wishes to contact you in an emergency while you are on an AdvenTour trip we recommend that they contact our operator by phone + 374 10 48 22 71 or E-mail: adventour@netsys.am.

6. Accommodation

We choose hotels/guesthouses that combine comfort and great service with unique ambiance and appreciation of the natural beauty of a region. The emphasis is on location and practicality.

Our tours are based on 3 star properties. In capital cities and other places where higher-class accommodation is available you can upgrade if you wish. Your tour leader will help arrange this and the extra cost will be paid by you. In areas where hotels are not available, particularly in small towns in the regions, the group will stay at

a local guesthouse (often with shared facilities). Some campsites we stay in are equipped with showers, toilets, electricity and a common eating area. Where no campsites are available we go wild camping (no facilities). These are limited to once or twice a tour and are in areas where you can enjoy the scenery. All other nights will be in campsites/hotels as described above.

Single Supplement

Should you want more privacy during your trip, you can upgrade by the requesting your own room, often at a little extra cost.

Pre / Post-Tour Accommodation

If you require additional accommodation either before or after the trip, we can book this for you. Please contact AdvenTour for current prices.

7. Transport and private transfers

The mode of transport we use is chosen to suit the environmental aspects and local infrastructure. During tours we use comfortable, air-conditioned cars, minibuses and buses as well as some local transport that is well-maintained and supplied with a first-aid kit. In fact, we often use more than one type of transport per trip. And just in case you are wondering – we also travel by foot.

Airport transfers are not included in the cost of the trip. Please, let us know at the time of booking if you would like us to arrange a private transfer for you.

8. Staff and support

While on AdvenTour trips, you will be accompanied by a tour leader/driver. The tour leader is in charge of general organization of your trip making sure that you have a most enjoyable time. He/she has broad general knowledge of the places visited, including historical, cultural, religious and social aspects. The tour leader is able to provide suggestions on what to do and see and can recommend great local eating venues. Local guides are an important part of AdvenTour team, they are trained by us and support our groups in sites and locations where their special knowledge of the trails, particular activities or communities will add to the enjoyment of the tour.

9. Meals

The tour cost includes bed and breakfast in the hotels and guesthouses. Meals, when included, will feature local cuisine. For other meals, you are left to choose what and where to eat, though

your tour leader will be on hand to suggest venues and arrange where necessary. This can be one of the great joys of this trip as the food in Armenia is superb. Vegetarians should have no problems on this tour.

10. Laundry

Facilities are offered by most hotels for a charge.

11. Visas

Citizens of EU, USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and a number of other countries can obtain Armenian visa upon arrival at the airport or land border. All other nationals are advised to consult Armenian Embassy in their country of residence. Georgian visa is not required for EU, USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand citizens. All other national are advised to consult the Georgian Embassy in their country of residence. Turkish visa is obtained upon arrival at the airport or land border. Iranian visa support is provided by AdvenTour through local partners in Iran. Visa regulations can and do change without notice. Please check the current regulations in good time to obtain a visa if one is required.

12. Travel luggage

Because of limited luggage space on transfer vehicles, we limit each passenger to ONE main suitcase or frameless backpack (the size not more than 75cm x 45cm x 25cm, the weight no more than 20 kg) and one day bag. The daypack is practical for keeping general items (e.g. camera, books, wallets etc.) at hand when your main pack is out of reach. Please note many hotels in the regions do not have porters and you will need to carry your own luggage.

Travel tip 1: On some tours, if you wish, it is possible to leave surplus clothes and other personal equipment in hotels where you will return after your circular trip. Please bring a small bag to pack excess items in and leave the bag at the hotel. Mark your luggage with your name and arrival date. Please ask your tour leader to advise where this may be possible / advisable.

Travel tip 2: You might be tempted to buy a few souvenirs here and there, so leave a little room for those extra purchases!

13. Safety

We always recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt while traveling, for the safe keeping of your passport, air tickets, cash and other valuable items. All the hotels we use have safety deposit boxes, which can be used to store your valuables.

14. Responsible tourism

Tourism can be a real help to local communities providing income, positive cultural exchanges and the financial incentive to protect the natural environment. Our trips are designed to use family-based guesthouses in the regions, buy local food, hire local guides, drivers and rent trucks to ensure that as much money as possible is retained within the local economies.

15. Feedback

After your travel, we would like to hear from you. Within two weeks after your departure we will send you a feedback form to complete.

Information in this document has been compiled with care and is provided in good faith. However it is subject to change and does not form part of the contract between the client and AdvenTour.