

SKI MOUNTAINEERING ARMENIA

Character:

For most Armenia is not a place associated with great skiing, we aim to uncover just that - its exceptional adventure skiing. On this tour we will explore Mount Aragats, an extinct volcano with four peaks and one of the biggest craters in the world and Mount Azhdahak soaring thousands of meters above stunning Lake Sevan bound in ice. Designed for the person who is an avid ski mountaineer already this trip includes every element of advanced ski mountaineering - big vertical gains, winter camping and a venture into the spectacular world of volcanic ski touring.

Duration:

7 days / 7 nights

Accommodation:

Superior hotels and winter camp (4 nights)

Meals:

7 breakfasts, 1 dinner

Mode of travel:

Comfortable, air-conditioned vehicles/ski

Tour support:

AdvenTour trekking guide with winter training/driver

Included:

Hotel accommodation for 3 nights

Winter camp accommodation for 4 nights (tents, other common camping equipment)

Meals as specified in the itinerary (full board camping available for extra cost)

AdvenTour trekking guide with winter training/driver

All activities as per itinerary

All group ski-mountaineering equipment such as ropes and other technical equipment

All transfers in comfortable 4WD vehicles

Ski mountaineering in Armenia information kit

Excluded:

Optional activities

Personal gear (available for rent)

Itinerary

Day 1

Mount Aragats, Acclimatisation

Early morning meeting with your ski mountaineering guide Mkhitar and other group participants. With a short transfer to Byurakan village very early in the morning (6.00) we get a head start on our ski adventure. The ascent from Byurakan to Kari Lake (3,200 m) spectacularly situated at a cirque beneath the towering spires of Aragats will be our first acclimatization hike (about 20 km skiing up by an easy slope). The air is getting thinner now and it can take from 6 to 12 hours depending on snow, weather conditions as well as the ability of the group. We set a camp above Kari Lake on the way to the Western Peak of Mount Aragats.

Overnight: Winter camp

Meal plan: Breakfast

Day 2

Mount Aragats, On the way to Northern Peak

An early morning ski tour gets us to the south-western saddle, then downhill skiing in the crater (35 degree slope), then up to the north-eastern saddle. This day includes traversing, wicked ski ascent and a journey through an incredibly picturesque terrain. We set up the camp in the saddle under high snow walls to protect the camp from the winds. Total distance covered today is about 7 km.

Overnight: Winter camp

Meal plan: Breakfast

Day 3

Aragats, Northern Peak

An early start in the morning and ascent of the highest peak of Aragats, Northern Peak (4,080 m) followed by skiing down the crater (40 degree slope). We will brake down camp early and cross over to the saddle to continue to the Eastern peak (3 951 m). A 16 km ski descent (20-30 degree slope) leads us to Aragats village. Transfer back to Yerevan, check-in at hotel, rest.

Overnight: Hotel in Yerevan

Meal plan: Breakfast

Day 4

Mount Azhdahak

Early morning (6.00) transfer to village Sevaberd by Russian 4WD car UAZ for two days of exploring the classic snow covered volcanic terrain at Mount Azhdahak (3,579 m), the highest point of a spectacular plateau east of Yerevan. Dressed in flowers in summer, the mount is not least impressive in winter - vast lands of untouched snow with surrounding mountains serving a scenic backdrop. At 8:00 we start a 14 km ski ascent by an easy slope of the Mount. We will set our camp at the slopes of Azhdahak. The remainder of the day is spent resting in preparation for our volcano climb tomorrow.

Overnight: Winter camp

Meal plan: Breakfast

Day 5

Climbing Mount Azhdahak

In the morning we start the ascent to the top of Mount Azhdahak rewarded by superb all-round views and a tangible sense of wilderness (35-40 degree). We reach the summit on midday and have a chance to enjoy the unforgettable views of stunning volcanic landscape surrounding us. Ski down the opposite slope (35-40 degree) and ski touring about 5 km towards our high camp in the direction of mountain village Yeranos.

Overnight: Winter camp

Meal plan: Breakfast

Day 6

Farewell to Snow Wilderness

At 8:00 ski down to Yeranos (about 10 km) where our transfer awaits to take us to Yerevan. We check in at our hotel in Yerevan. Returning to civilisation will be something of a culture shock after our ski adventures in the mountains of Armenia. Today we have a farewell dinner at an ethnic restaurant to get a taste of real Armenian food and full-blooded wine from Ararat Valley.

Overnight: Hotel in Yerevan

Meal plan: Breakfast, dinner

Day 7

Yerevan is one of the oldest continually inhabited cities in the world and deserves a tour. We will do this with a local guide and historian who will show us the main highlights leaving late afternoon free to relax or browse Vernisage for last-minute souvenirs.

Overnight: Hotel in Yerevan

Free day 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 travelling in Armenia. The country's climate is very pleasant, with no health risks. Water in Armenia is very clean and safe. However, travellers 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. Travellers 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. Insurance for medical and repatriation costs is mandatory. Travellers are advised to consult their insurance company prior to travelling to confirm whether their policy applies overseas and covers emergency expenses such as medical evacuation.

3. Skiing conditions

This trip is categorised as Ski Mountaineering, Grade B. It involves mountainous terrain and requires excellent physical condition and advanced skiing ability. Each day the leader will carefully assess the situation (weather, snow) and choose the route according to current conditions and those forecast, with the overriding priority being group safety. Our leaders are required not to proceed with any proposed route (including those mentioned in brochure or trip notes) if they believe the risk to be unacceptable.

Please note: the itinerary is to be used as an idea of how the trip will flow. Group dynamics, snow conditions and weather may alter our routes and objectives.

Please prepare well. This tour is very strenuous and not over until you are in the car!

Grading B (strenuous)

Designed for ski mountaineers with advanced skiing ability and excellent physical fitness. Involves mountainous terrain and

4. Weather

Aragats and Azhdahak mountains are located at almost 4,000m and at this height snow can lie from November to May, with fresh snowfalls at any time. Average daytime temperatures in winter range from 10-20°C, though they can fall as low as - 25°C. At all times of the winter we can hope for periods of clear bright weather and in February and March it can become surprisingly warm in the sun. Equally, at all times we need to be ready for the occasional stormy day.

5. Money

You will need to allow enough money for meals as well as optional activities. An average meal in a restaurant should cost between EUR8-10. Tipping is customized and not compulsory. You should be aware that Armenia 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 Yerevan and other cities where you can obtain cash. 10 000 Armenian Drams (approximately EUR 26) is charged as a departure tax on exiting Armenia by air.

Please note: we do not charge sightseeing fees in advance allowing you to choose whether or not you visit sites, depending upon your interests.

6. 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 91 42 67 45 or E-mail: adventour@netsys.am.

7. Accommodation

We choose facilities that combine high level of comfort and service with unique design and appreciation of the natural beauty of a region. The emphasis is on location, practicality and reasonable degree of comfort. During this tour you will have 4 overnights at winter camps at Aragats and Azhdahak at pre-defined spots protected from winds. We provide special tents (sample - Black Diamond Eldorado, 2+, 2kg, gore-tex) and other common camping equipment. Helping the guide with erecting and

collecting tents as well as preparing simple hot breakfast will be necessary. Full-board camping is available for extra cost in which case you will have an additional escort/cook/assistant. 2 last nights of this tour will be spent in Yerevan where we will offer a 3 star hotel (Hrazdan Hotel or similar) - to be specified at the time of booking.

Hotel/Guesthouse

Accommodation is generally in same sex twin rooms. If you are sharing with another single no supplement is necessary. Our costs are generally based on 3 star properties. If you want higher-class accommodation you can request an upgrade at the time of booking.

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 provided you notify us at the time of booking. Please contact AdvenTour for current prices. Payment for this must be made to AdvenTour. Please note that AMD 5,000 booking fee is added to the cost.

8. Transport and private transfers

The mode of transport we use is chosen to suit the environmental aspects and local infrastructure. During these tours we use comfortable 4WD vehicles 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.

9. Staff and support

While on AdvenTour trips, you will be accompanied by a tour leader/driver. On this tour, you will be accompanied by a trekking guide with winter training (staff/tourist ratio: 3 to 1 or 6 to 2). 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.

10. 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.

11. Laundry

Facilities are offered by all hotels for a charge.

12. Visas

To obtain a tourist visa for traveling to Armenia, you should apply to the Embassy of the Republic of Armenia in your country or online at

<http://www.armeniaforeignministry.com/eVisa/>.

Another option is to obtain your visa upon arrival at Zvartnots International Airport. Visa regulations can and do change without notice. Please check the current regulations in good time to obtain a visa if one is required.

13. What to take

We provide all communal mountaineering equipment during the tours. You will need to provide your own personal clothing and equipment. This should include touring skis, ski-mountaineering boots, crampons, ice axe, rucksack and harness. Skis and all other technical equipment is available for rent. Please indicate your requirements for this at the time of booking.

14. Safety

Armenia is a very safe country. Anyway 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.

15. 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.

16. 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.

	AdvenTour Booking Form	
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Title / First Name / Surname	Nationality	Passport No.	Issue Date	Exp. Date	Date of Birth
Lead contact name					
Group members					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					

Address	Emergency Contact Details
Lead contact	Name Relationship Tel. No. (home) E-mail
Tel. No. (home):	
Tel. No. (work):	
E-mail:	

Travel Insurance:	On all of our tours it is compulsory that you have travel insurance. Please fill in your policy details below.				
	Policy Issuer		Policy Number		Emergency Phone No:

TOUR CODE	TOUR NAME	Start Date
Room Type	Double ----	Twin -----
		Single -----
		Triple -----
Extra nights/transfers/rentals, etc. (if required)		
Special Requests (diet, food allergies, etc.)		
Inbound Flight No.	Arrival Date	Arrival Time
Outbound Flight No.	Departure Date	Departure Time

Tour Cost per person	€
Single supplement (if applicable)	+ €
Extra nights/transfers/rentals, etc. (if required)	+ €
Total Cost per person	€
Number in Group	X
Total Group cost	= €

How did you hear about us? (internet, magazine, friend etc) – please specify	
Do you wish to receive periodic news and product information via your e-mail? Yes No	
Declaration: I have read, understood, and accept the booking conditions provided on AdvenTour or associated website, on behalf of all members of my party, by whom I am authorised to make this agreement. I enclose the deposit (as detailed above), which is non-refundable in the event of my cancellation.	
----- Signature	----- Date

Deposit: €200 per person. Balance due now, payment by Visa, Master or Amex (please add 0.5% for Amex). Full amount is payable if your departure is in less than 45 days.

Final Balance: Balance due 45 days prior to departure. Final balance is payable by bank transfer. We will send you the invoice and our bank details.