

GEORGIA

Black Sea Odyssey: Exploring Georgia's Rich Tapestry

TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

- ▶ Uncover the enchanting allure of Tbilisi as you explore its charming streets, ancient sites, vibrant local markets, and unique shopping scene
- ▶ Immerse yourself in Georgia's renowned wine culture, savoring rare natural wines and exceptional Georgian dishes
- ▶ Engage with local artists and families, learn the art of breadmaking and the expert craftsmanship behind wine fermenting and storing vessels
- ▶ Embark on a scenic hike to Holy Trinity and traverse the picturesque landscapes of Dairali Gorge

TRIP ROUTE



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QUICK VIEW ITINERARY

Day 1	arrive in Tbilisi, Georgia
Day 2	discover Tbilisi and its most ancient and impressive sites on foot, welcome dinner
Day 3	continue your exploration of Tbilisi, visit a jewelry workshop, taste rare natural wines from across Georgia
Day 4	visit Mtskheta and discover its wine-tasting scene, journey through the Georgian Military Highway, arrive in Kazbegi
Day 5	hike to Holy Trinity, travel through the cliffs of Dariali Gorge, enjoy a visit and lunch with a local family
Day 6	drive to Vazisubani in the Kakheti region, delight in wine tasting followed by lunch, visit the Alaverdi Monastery and Cathedral
Day 7	drive to Telavi, browse its local farmer's market and unique architecture, visit a qvevri ceramist, arrive in Signani
Day 8	explore the Magaro and Qedeli villages, enjoy craft beers tasting, learn how to make bread, discover Signagi
Day 9	return to Tbilisi for a free afternoon to souvenir shop or relax, enjoy a festive farewell dinner
Day 10	depart Tbilisi

ACTIVITY LEVEL

Active

TRIP PRICE

Main Trip: \$5,995

Optional Single Accommodations: \$1,200

TRIP DATES

April 25 - May 4, 2025

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DAY 1
Friday
4/25/25

Arrive in Tbilisi, Georgia

Situated at the crossroads of Eastern Europe and Western Asia, Georgia shares borders with Russia to the north, Azerbaijan to the southeast, Armenia to the south, and Turkey to the southwest. Tbilisi, its capital and largest city, stands at the heart of the country. The official language is Georgian, distinguished by its unique alphabet. Georgia boasts a rich and ancient history, with traces of human habitation reaching back to the Paleolithic era. The country gained independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. Renowned for its flavorful cuisine, Georgian dishes such as khachapuri (cheese-filled bread), khinkali (dumplings), and various grilled meats showcase the nation's culinary excellence. Additionally, wine-making holds a cherished and traditional significance in Georgian culture.

Arrival Information

Arrive at Tbilisi International Airport (TBS) at any time today. A group transfer from the airport to the hotel will be provided when most guests arrive (exact time to be determined). Private transfers at other times are available for purchase.

Dinner

Dinner will be on your own tonight.

Accommodations

Strofi Hotel

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DAY 2
Saturday
4/26/25

Tbilisi

Tbilisi, the capital of Georgia from the 5th century AD has a long and fascinating history. Founded in the 4th century, it developed into the main city of the Caucasus. By the 12th century, Tbilisi was one of the most important political, economic and cultural centers of the Middle East. It stood as a key stop on the famous Silk Road, right on the border between Europe and Asia. Tbilisi's Old Town, the most ancient part of the city, is renowned for its wonderful mix of cultures.

Tbilisi Walking Tour

Explore the charming old town of Tbilisi, and visit the fairytale-like Gabriadze clock tower, the Anchiskhati Basilica, and the historic Abanotubani District with its famous Sulfur Baths. Ride a cable car to Narikala Fortress, enjoy the views from the Statue of Kartlis Deda, see the famous stairs of Betlemi Street, and visit the 13th century Metekhi Church, "The Great Synagogue" and the Sioni Cathedral.

Lunch and Afternoon Activities

After lunch on your own, discover the exquisite handcrafted items at Gallery 27, showcasing handmade goods and artwork crafted by Georgian artists. The graceful Bridge of Peace, links the Old Town to Rike Park. Explore the Dry Bridge Market with everything from jewelry to tableware and tools.

Welcome Dinner

Enjoy a festive welcome dinner and connect with your fellow travelers over a traditional Georgian meal. Share stories and discover the unique reasons each woman in your group is excited to explore Georgia. During dinner, a Georgian Polyphonic Vocal Traditions group will share their oral musical tradition, which relies on fifths rather than octaves to give this choral music a rich, slightly discordant sound to Western ears.

Accommodations

Strofi Hotel

Meals Included

breakfast, dinner

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DAY 3
Sunday
4/27/25

Tbilisi

Tbilisi, the capital of Georgia, has a rich culinary tradition that reflects the country's diverse history and cultural influences. Georgian cuisine is known for its bold flavors, generous use of herbs and spices, and unique culinary techniques. Georgia also has a long history of winemaking. The city offers a wide range of restaurants, from casual eateries to fine dining establishments, where you can indulge in the diverse and delicious Georgian cuisine.

Tbilisi State Academy of Art

Step into history when you visit the Tbilisi State Academy of Art, one of Georgia's oldest universities. Located in Central Tbilisi near the renowned opera house on Rustaveli Avenue, this heritage site boasts an intriguing blend of European sensibilities with decor of the Orient.

Stroll Rustaveli Avenue

The main thoroughfare of Tbilisi, Rustaveli Avenue was named for Shota Rustaveli, a medieval Georgian poet. The Parliament and many of the city's museums and cultural centers are located along the street.

Lunch and Afternoon Experiences

Following a delightful lunch as a group at a nearby restaurant, engage in casual conversations with Georgian women. Next, partake in a private meeting with Nino Mamulashvili, the owner of Kebzari Jewelry. Nino specializes in crafting exquisite, high-end pieces that seamlessly blend traditional aesthetics with contemporary influences. Conclude the day by descending into a local cool cellar for a unique wine tasting experience, savoring rare natural wines sourced from various regions across Georgia.

Dinner

Dinner will be on your own tonight.

Accommodations

Strofi Hotel

Meals Included

breakfast, lunch

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DAY 4
Monday
4/28/25

Tbilisi - Mtskheta - Kazbegi

Kazbegi, also known as Stepantsminda, is a small town in the Mtskheta-Mtianeti region of Georgia. Kazbegi is a hidden gem in Georgia, offering a unique blend of natural beauty, cultural richness, and adventure. It's a must-visit for anyone looking to explore the stunning landscapes of the Caucasus Mountains and experience the warm hospitality of the region.

Mtskheta Visit

Mtskheta was the capital of the eastern Georgian kingdom of Iberia from the 3rd century BC until the 5th century AD. Georgia's conversion to Christianity took place here in 337 AD, and the Orthodox churches built during this period are considered among the finest in the country. Mtskheta is designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Samtavro Convent

The Samtavro Convent of St. Nino was built in honor of the rulers whom St. Nino converted to Christianity, King Mirian and Queen Nana. A tiny 4th century chapel is where St. Nino is said to have prayed, and the main church houses the tombs of the king and queen.

Wine Tasting

Enjoy lunch as a group at a winery located outside Mtskheta and dedicated to crafting traditional flavors reminiscent of beloved dishes, infused with modern elements in their culinary creations.

Georgian Military Highway and Ananuri

Explore the hidden treasures along the Georgian Military Highway which was completed by Czar Alexander I in 1817. Travel from Tbilisi through rolling green hills and steep arid mountains, encountering herds of sheep and fortress-like churches. From the feudal stronghold of Ananuri fortress, admire the blue expanse of Zhinvali Reservoir, making this one of Georgia's most beautiful places.

Dinner

Enjoy dinner with your group at the hotel restaurant.

Accommodations

Rooms Hotel Kazbegi

Meals Included

breakfast, lunch, dinner

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DAY 5
Tuesday
4/29/25

Kazbegi

Khinkali, a cherished part of Georgia's culinary heritage, is a traditional Georgian dumpling. Crafted from a delicate, unleavened dough, the dumpling encases a meat filling blended with finely chopped onions, spices, and herbs. The distinctive folding technique of khinkali involves shaping it like a miniature purse, leaving the top knot open to form a knob, creating a convenient handle. Khinkali holds a special place in social gatherings, often shared joyfully among family and friends. A symbol of Georgian cuisine, it is a must-try for visitors immersing themselves in the country's culinary delights.

Trinity Church with Optional Hike

Perched on a hill above Kazbegi are the 14th-century church of Tsminda Sameba (Holy Trinity) is located at about 7,120 ft (2,170 m) and is one of Georgia's most iconic sites. For those who are interested, a guide will be available for an early morning hike up and back (plan for approximately 2.5 hours).

Dariali Gorge

Drive through the granite cliffs of Dariali Gorge, north of Kazbegi on the Georgian Military Highway. The stunning seven-mile drive along the Terek River leads to one of only two border crossings into Russia. In some places the mountains loom 3,000 feet (900 meters) above the road. For those interested, a hiking is also an option.

Local Family Visit and Lunch

Visit a local family in the tiny village of Tsdo, where you'll participate in a master class in the art of making khinkali. Khinkali are traditional savory Georgian dumplings filled with a mixture of minced mutton, beef or pork and boiled or steamed. Feast on your creations at lunch together with the family, while sipping fiery Georgian chacha, a moonshine-type liquor usually made from grapes.

Dinner

Enjoy dinner on your own tonight.

Accommodations

Rooms Hotel Kazbegi

Meals Included

breakfast, lunch

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DAY 6
Wednesday
4/30/25

Vazisubani, Kakheti Region

Vazisubani is located in the Kakheti region. Kakheti is situated in the eastern part of Georgia, and renowned for its captivating scenery, rich historical tapestry, and dynamic winemaking heritage. Recognized as the "wine region" of Georgia, Kakheti stands as one of the world's oldest centers for wine production, boasting a winemaking legacy that spans millennia. The region upholds traditional methods, including the fermentation and aging of wine in large clay vessels known as qvevris. Kakheti has evolved into a favored destination for wine enthusiasts and tourists eager to delve into the distinctive winemaking practices of Georgia.

A cultural and religious landmark in the Kakheti region is the Alaverdi Monastery, which encompasses a cathedral, wine cellar, and a qvevri workshop. This significant site serves as a testament to the deep-rooted winemaking traditions carried on by the monks of Alaverdi, connecting the present to ancient practices.

Lunch and Wine Tasting

Explore a fantastic winery close to Telavi, where you can indulge in a delightful wine tasting experience paired with lunch. This winery follows traditional Georgian winemaking techniques, highlighting the importance of full skin contact and fermenting the wine in qvevris. The vineyard proudly features the exclusive Ikaltos Tsiteli grape variety, highly coveted by enthusiasts of Georgian wine.

Alaverdi Cathedral

Visit the Alaverdi Monastery and Cathedral, one of the tallest churches in Georgia and, in its simplicity, one of the most striking. The village of Alvani is a gateway to the spectacular mountainous province of Tusheti, known for its carpets and hand-woven stockings.

Dinner

Enjoy dinner on your own tonight.

Accommodations

Vazisubani Estate

Meals Included

breakfast, lunch

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DAY 7
Thursday
5/1/25

Vazisubani - Telavi - Signagi

Telavi, with a population of approximately 20,000, serves as the administrative and cultural hub of Kakheti, Georgia's wine-growing region. With roots dating back to at least the 1st century, Telavi played a role as a stop along trade routes connecting the Middle East to Europe. Notably, it houses Georgia's sole well-preserved palace, the 17th-century castle of Herekle II. In a fascinating connection, Telavi is twinned with Napa Valley, California, the foremost wine-growing region in the United States.

Discover Telavi

The town of Kakheti has existed since the 1st century, when it was a stop on one of the trade routes from the Middle East to Europe. Interestingly, Telavi is the sister city of Napa Valley, California. Browse the local farmer's market, with its large variety of fruits, vegetables, meat, cheese, local spices, and much more. Step back in time as you weave through winding alleys full of lavishly carved Kakhetian balconies. Stop in at the workshop of a ceramicist who makes qvevri, the 200 to 900-gallon earthenware vessels used for fermenting and storing Georgian wines. Lunch will be on your own today.

Arrive in Signagi and Dinner

Drive East to Signagi, perhaps Georgia's most charming city. Check in at your centrally located hotel and walk a few blocks to dine as a group at one of the country's most renowned restaurants, Pheasant's Tears Restaurant.

Accommodations

Kabadoni Hotel

Meals Included

breakfast, dinner

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DAY 8
Friday
5/2/25

Signagi and the Villages of Magaro and Qedeli

Signagi, nestled in the Kakheti region of eastern Georgia, is a quaint and captivating town perched on a hilltop overlooking the Alazani Valley, and providing captivating panoramic vistas of the Caucasus Mountains. An integral part of the Kakheti wine region, Signagi is celebrated for its well-preserved defensive walls, originally constructed in the 18th century. Emerging as a favored tourist destination, Signagi entices visitors with its romantic ambiance, historical allure, and unparalleled scenery.

Magaro Village Visit with Lamara

Visit Magaro Village for a visit and a meal with Lamara Bejashvili, who raises silkworms, rabbits, sheep, and chickens, as well as tends a wonderful garden. Lamara is happy to share her encyclopedic knowledge of wild and cultivated medicinal and edible herbs, old recipes and a lot more!

Lost Ridge Brewing

Enjoy tasting Georgian craft beers at Lost Ridge Brewing, Georgia's first village craft brewery. Lost Ridge specializes in bottle-conditioned farmhouse ales including styles such as Saison and Tripel. Brewed on-site and aged in the beer cave, the brewery pairs classic Belgian (and other) styles with local Kakhetian fruits and spices in some of their recipes. Partake in a Georgian bread baking class at the Lost Ridge Fire Kitchen, and enjoy lunch as a group with Kakhetian dishes prepared using natural, locally sourced ingredients.

Explore Signagi and Dinner

In the 18th century, King Erekle II constructed a defensive wall around the hill-town of Signagi. The town's location in an agricultural region helped it to grow quickly, and it became an important agricultural center for the Soviet Union. After the fall of the Soviet Union, Signagi suffered an economic crisis and has since undergone an extensive reconstruction project. Dinner will be on your own tonight: there are many dining options with fantastic views available in this lovely hilltop town setting.

Accommodations

Kabadoni Hotel

Meals Included

breakfast, lunch

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DAY 9
Saturday
5/3/25

Tbilisi

While Tbilisi boasts a rich cultural history, its shopping scene is equally vibrant and diverse, catering to a broad spectrum of interests and preferences. The city is home to a variety of traditional markets and bazaars where one can discover fresh produce, local delicacies, and handcrafted items. Tbilisi's fashion landscape is flourishing, featuring numerous boutiques that showcase a mix of both local and international designer brands. Renowned for its up-and-coming fashion designers, the city offers unique and stylish clothing options, particularly in districts like the Old Town and Rustaveli Avenue. With a lively literary culture, Tbilisi hosts several bookstores, providing a haven for book enthusiasts. For those captivated by vintage and retro charm, Tbilisi's streets are dotted with shops specializing in pre-loved clothing, accessories, and one-of-a-kind treasures.

Return to Tbilisi and Free Afternoon

Following breakfast at the hotel, return to Tbilisi for a free afternoon to souvenir shop or relax.

Farewell Dinner

Enjoy a farewell dinner with your new AdventureWomen friends in the beautiful garden of an Old Tbilisi District house. Reminisce on all the memories you have made and celebrate the end of an amazing journey through this truly spectacular country.

Accommodations

Strofi Hotel

Meals Included

breakfast, dinner

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DAY 10
Sunday
5/4/25

Depart Georgia

It's time to say goodbye to your guide, the beautiful people of the Caucasus, and your new AdventureWomen friends!

Departure Information

After breakfast, you will be transferred to Tbilisi International Airport (TBS). You can depart at any time today. The transfer to the airport will be provided when most guests depart (exact time to be determined). Private transfers at other times are available for purchase.

Please note: AdventureWomen will attempt to adhere to the itinerary as much as possible. However, certain conditions (political, climatic, environmental, and cultural) may necessitate changes in the itinerary. AdventureWomen reserves the right to alter any itinerary at any time, if necessary. We will attempt to notify participants of changes as far in advance as possible. Costs incurred by such changes will be the responsibility of the participants.

Meals Included
breakfast

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Accommodation Details

Strofi Hotel

Strofi stands as a charming boutique hotel nestled in the historic heart of Tbilisi, situated on the renowned Lado Asatiani Street, named after the esteemed Georgian poet. The profound connection between Asatiani's poetry and his affection for this enchanting city serves as the foundational inspiration for the hotel's essence. Throughout the lobby and hallways, excerpts from Asatiani's verses grace the walls. Occupying a building with roots dating back to the 19th century, the seamless integration of the new and the old creates a harmonious blend, fostering an ambiance that exudes authenticity and romance.

Amenities: complimentary toiletries, hair dryer, safe, coffee / tea maker, air conditioning, free Wi-Fi

Rooms Hotel Kazbegi

Rooms Hotel Kazbegi provides a luxurious environment coupled with numerous convenient amenities to elevate your experience. This property offers well-appointed guest rooms, boasts a heated pool and offers complimentary breakfast, adding to the overall comfort. Explore the local dining scene with cafes all located a short distance from Rooms Hotel Kazbegi. Immerse yourself in the unique charm of Stepantsminda and make the most of your stay!

Amenities: complimentary toiletries, minibar, refrigerator, free Wi-Fi

Vazisubani Estate

Situated in Vazisubani, 24 km from King Erekle II Palace, Vazisubani Estate features accommodation with a seasonal outdoor swimming pool, a garden and a shared lounge. The lodging features a restaurant that specializes in local cuisine. Guests can also request vegetarian, dairy-free, and vegan options to cater to their dietary preferences.

Amenities: complimentary toiletries, flat-screen TV, air conditioning, free Wi-Fi

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Accommodation Details

Kabadoni Hotel

Hotel Kabadoni brings together 21 rooms, each offering breathtaking panoramic views. One side unveils a picturesque landscape of vineyards strewn across the Alazani Valley and the majestic Caucasus Mountains, while the other side captures the charm of the historic neighborhood of Signaghi. The interior design seamlessly blends art nouveau, ancient Georgian, and eastern motifs. The fusion of modern, sleek and straightforward furniture forms, along with a neutral color palette, results in an elegant and comfortable environment, providing a delightful setting for relaxation and leisure.

Amenities: complimentary toiletries, minibar, flat-screen TV, air conditioning, free Wi-Fi

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Included:

- ▶ Accommodations as per itinerary based on double occupancy
- ▶ All meals as listed in the itinerary
- ▶ All ground transportation
- ▶ One group transfer on arrival and departure
- ▶ Guided sightseeing and activities as indicated in the itinerary
- ▶ Entrance fees
- ▶ English-speaking guide(s) throughout the trip
- ▶ Bottled/purified water with included meals and onboard vehicle
- ▶ All gratuities except for the tour leader and main driver

Not Included:

- ▶ International airfare to and from Georgia
- ▶ Optional activities
- ▶ Meals not specified in the itinerary
- ▶ Alcoholic beverages (unless otherwise specified)
- ▶ Fees for passport, visas, immunizations, or travel insurance
- ▶ Cost of hospitalization or evacuation
- ▶ Items of a personal nature
- ▶ Gratuities for the tour leader and main driver

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Cancellations and Refunds

Notification of cancellations must be received in writing. Full payment is due 90 days prior to departure date, and the registration deposit is non-refundable.

- For cancellations received 61-90 days prior to the trip departure date: 50% of the total trip cost is non-refundable.
- For cancellations received 1-60 days prior to the trip departure date: 100% of the total trip cost is non-refundable.

You are highly encouraged to purchase **trip cancellation insurance** to cover emergency situations. Travel insurance information will be sent to you once you have registered for your trip.

Switching Trips

Our deposits are nonrefundable and nontransferable. If for some reason you need to switch to a different trip, please call us and we will do our best to accommodate you, but switching is not guaranteed.

No Smoking Policy

Beginning in 1995, our trips became smoke free. Please note that there will be no smoking by any participants on AdventureWomen trips.

Health Insurance

You must have your own health insurance to participate in an AdventureWomen trip.

Adventure Travel Today

We define "adventure travel" as travel in which one actively participates, as opposed to a "tour," in which one is more or less a passive observer. AdventureWomen designs and organizes trips all over the world for women who want an active, out of the ordinary experience, and meet new friends. **Most of all, we want our trips to be fun!** In this spirit, the successful adventure traveler should be a good-natured realist and have a sense of humor! Adventure trips, by nature, require that participants be self-sufficient, flexible, and able to accept situations as they exist, and not just as they would have preferred or expected them to exist. The constraints of scheduled group traveling also necessitate that each of us be understanding of and sensitive to others. Being on time is important, and contributes to the congeniality, success and well-being of both individuals and the group!