

@maxglobetrotter



CLASSIC GEORGIA: FOOD, WINE AND CULTURE

11 NIGHTS | 07-18 OCTOBER, 2019 | \$2940 USD PER PERSON

What's Included?

- Fully escorted by a local Georgian guide and "MaxGlobetrotter"
- Four nights in Tbilisi at the Iota Hotel
- Three nights in Signaghi at the Hotel Kabadoni
- One night in Tskaltubo
- Two nights in Mestia and the Hotel Tetnuldi
- One night at the Hotel Argo in Kutaisi
- Daily breakfast and lunch and ten dinners
- Five wine tastings and two folkloric performances
- All entrance fees and excursions as detailed on the itinerary
- Transportation by coach throughout, with 4WD vehicles for the day excursion to Ushguli
- Airport transfers
- All local taxes

What's Excluded?

- International Airfare
- Items not specified in the itinerary
- Items of a personal nature
- Optional gratuities
- Credit card processing fees

How to Book:

A non-refundable deposit of \$750 USD is required to confirm your space on this tour.

Please contact Top of the World Travel:
travel@topoftheworldtravel.com
867 766 6000

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Day 1: Arrival in Tbilisi, and transfer to our accommodation. Arrival times in the Georgian capital may appear slightly eccentric, with many flights arriving between 0200 and 0300. Your rooms will be available from the afternoon of October 6th, and you will be met and transferred to the hotel regardless of the arrival time.

Day 2: There will be an optional walking tour at 10.00am for those who are up and ready that will explore the quirky center of Old Tbilisi; we will see the city from each side of the River and have an introduction to the remarkable stories of the early days of this strategically important town. Lunch will be at iconic wine bar, Vino Underground for our first introduction to the glories of Georgian wine.

Day 3: The morning will be free to rest and adjust to the time zone, or explore the surrounding areas on your own. In the afternoon we will head out to Tbilisi to explore the Old Capital of Mtskheta and Svetitskhoveli Cathedral. This cathedral, founded in 1010, is one of the most sacred places in the country and is a fine introduction to the importance of the Georgian Orthodox church in the Georgian soul. Lunch at restaurant Dzveli Armazi in tskheta. Free time. Dinner at Café Littera, the home of the well-known chef Tekuna Gachechiladze.

Day 4: Today we will leave the capital behind and head west. First to the unremarkable town of Gori, made famous only because of its native son, Stalin. We shall visit the extraordinary, and rather chilling museum to his life before continuing over the Likhi mountains to Kutaisi, with one stop in the Kvaliti village to meet and taste the wines of Archil Guniava and finally arrive to Tskutalbo, our overnight stop. This resort was built in the 1970s as a resort exclusively for high-ranking Soviet Naval offices, and is makes a delightful and unique place to stay.

Day 5: Today we climb the mountains. After a coffee stop in Zugdidi, we will drive up the Svaneti Valley to Mestia. This region is special, even by Georgian standards! The communities that populate this valley are distinct and historically fiercely independent. We will see some dramatic scenery, gorgeous mountains and villages that have been here since the dawn of time. Finally, we will reach Mestia, the regional capital and now a center for hiking, skiing and a variety of other mountain-based activities.

Day 6: Ushguli is a UNESCO World Heritage Site; it is extremely remote and life here is redolent of the middle ages. It has a collection of dramatic medieval towers, and lying as it does at 2,300m, it is the highest populated community in Europe. We will have time to explore the village in some detail, and if the weather is clear, have a dramatic view of Georgia's highest mountain, Shkhara which towers some 5,100m over the landscape.

Day 7: Today we head back down the mountain to Kutaisi, Georgia's second city, and an important provincial capital. It is blessed with a two UNESCO sites, and we will visit one, the Gelati Monastery, built in the early 1100s by King David. It is not only an architectural masterpiece, but also an important center of learning for centuries, and one of the first schools in the region.

Day 8: Today is a "Driving Day"; we shall start the morning in the local market before driving east. We will stop for lunch at Iago's Winery, a charming family wine producer in the Kartli region. Iago's wine is remarkable, and his was the first winery in the country to receive a biocertificate for his vineyard and production. Skirting Tbilisi, we will enjoy the three-hour drive toward the Azeri border, and our next stop, this time for three nights, at Sighnaghi.

Day 9: There are many opportunities for sightseeing in this quirky town; we will spend time in the morning exploring the town itself before driving a few kilometers away to visit the 9th century monastery of Bodbe. It now functions as a nunnery, and is one of the major pilgrimage sites in Georgia. Following a short rest, we will have our dinner, a traditional Georgian Supra, at Pheasants' Tears. This restaurant and winery is one of the most vibrant in the country, and an exciting place to meet some of the finest Georgian wine, cuisine and be introduced to the unique polyphonic music.

Day 10: We will spend today exploring the region of Kakheti; we will see the main town of Telavi, and later visit the unusual and quite remarkable winery of Alaverdi. Visit the monastery, and we will continue towards Alazani where we will visit the family of young and enthusiastic wine maker Shota. He is from the mountains of Tusheti, and will cook Tushetian cuisine paired with the natural wines from the grower. Drive back to Sighnaghi, and enjoy dinner at a local restaurant. Overnight in Sighnaghi

Day 11: We will drive back to Tbilisi today and have time in the afternoon for some independent sightseeing before our farewell dinner at Azarpesha, a unique cultural restaurant in the center of Tbilisi's Old City.

Day 12: Your departure from Georgia. Once again your flight may have an early departure time, but your room will be available to rest in prior to your airport transfer.

